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**Case Studies of Officer and Enlisted  
Single Parents in the Army:  
Performance, Retention, and Quality of Life**

**Martha L. Teplitzky, Mark Hedlund, and Glenda Nogami**

**Personnel Utilization Technical Area  
Manpower and Personnel Research Laboratory**



**U. S. Army**

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## ARI Technical Report 749

## 20. Abstract (Continued)

encounter, and the variety of ways they respond to their different circumstances. The case study analyses also indicated that supervisors did not attribute performance problems or strengths in those they supervised to factors associated with single parent status. In the eyes of supervisors, the impact of personal characteristics (e.g., motivation and professionalism) on performance and readiness seemed to far outweigh the impact of any situational constraints associated with being a single parent. Four general themes were also identified from the case study analyses: (1) the importance of time to single parents, and the stress produced when work or family demands unexpected or inordinate amounts of time; (2) the prevalence of child-care problems, especially finding arrangements flexible enough to accommodate a military schedule; (3) the facilitative effect of a supportive and somewhat flexible work environment; and (4) the problems and anxiety associated with frequent relocations, especially the need to reestablish the network of social and child-care supports that enable single parents to function. The paper concludes with recommendations from single parents on ways the Army could make their lives easier.

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## FOREWORD

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The Personnel Utilization Technical Area of the U.S. Army Research Institute for the Behavioral and Social Sciences performs research on the factors that lead to retention of Army personnel. Increasingly, the Army's perspective on personnel issues reflects the awareness that soldiers are family members as well as members of the military community. The structure of an individual soldier's immediate family, as well as family-related needs, concerns, and responsibilities determine the family context within which soldiers perform their duties and make decisions about their military careers. This family context and its impact on the performance and career decisions of an important subgroup of the Army population are the focus of this report.

Single parents are a group about whom we know very little, and their numbers are increasing in both the civilian and military populations. Concerns for the well-being of single parent soldiers and their families, as well as concerns about the impact of this demanding lifestyle on military performance, readiness, and retention have provided the impetus for the research described in this report. The information is presented largely in the form of individual case studies and integrated summaries. Results derived from such a small sample cannot be construed as representative of the population of single parents in the Army. The findings do, however, provide some much-needed insight into the stresses and strains of this family structure, the capacity of soldiers to adapt to adverse circumstances, and their attempts to cope with the sometimes conflicting demands of work and family. In the context of the larger body of on-going research on Army families, this report furthers our understanding of the work/family interface and will contribute to our efforts to better understand, manage, and serve the military population.

This research was funded under program element 20263731 A792, under work unit 2.4.2.H.1 in FY 1984-1986. The research sponsors included the office of the Deputy Chief of Staff for Personnel (ODCSPER), Enlisted Sustainment and Distribution Branch, and the Community and Family Support Center (CFSC). The results of this research were briefed to key personnel in these agencies, and will be used to develop programs and policies for the retention and well-being of soldiers and officers.

EDGAR M. JOHNSON  
Technical Director

## CASE STUDIES OF OFFICER AND ENLISTED SINGLE PARENTS IN THE ARMY: PERFORMANCE, RETENTION, AND QUALITY OF LIFE

### EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

#### Requirements:

The Army is concerned with the retention of high-performing soldiers and the quality of life experienced by military members and their families. Single parent families represent a significant proportion of military families, yet few studies have addressed the special needs of this group or the impact of single parent status on military performance, career intentions, and quality of life. The current research addresses these issues and offers guidelines for future research, as well as suggestions for ways the Army might help single parents cope with their dual military and family responsibilities.

#### Procedure:

In-depth interviews were conducted with 27 single parents (12 officers and 15 enlisted) and their immediate supervisors. Information was summarized in the form of case study reports, and conclusions were drawn based on trends and recurrent themes in the data.

#### Findings:

Self-reports and supervisory performance evaluations suggest that single parenthood is a viable family status in the Army; many single parents appear to cope admirably with the sometimes conflicting demands of work and family life. Work/family conflicts do, however, contribute to concerns about making the Army a career. The areas of most concern to single parents include time pressures, daily child-care arrangements, back-up and emergency supports for children, and frequent relocations. Situational factors affecting the needs of single parents include financial status, availability of support from other family members, and the ages and number of children in the household. Suggestions made by single parents concerning ways the Army might help them focus on improving child-care services, developing flexibility in assignment policies and schedules, and providing counseling and referral services.

#### Utilization of Findings:

It must be emphasized that the data discussed in this report are based on a very small sample that may not be representative of the population of single parents in the Army. The case studies do, however, illustrate the diversity of single parent lifestyles in the Army and can serve to dispel stereotypes and enlarge our understanding of single parent issues. Leaders and decision-makers can apply the broader perspective of single parent issues offered by this report to their efforts to define and understand the problem. Family

advocates and service providers (e.g., the Community and Family Services Center) can use soldier comments from this research to focus their efforts on developing programs responsive to the needs of nontraditional, as well as traditional, Army families.

From a research perspective, the case study analyses identify themes and relationships to be explored in larger scale, representative sample studies. Such additional research is needed to provide a basis for informed policy decisions on the issues affecting single parents. As future researchers attempt to interpret their findings, these preliminary case studies can provide a context for translating statistical relationships into a better understanding of the real-life problems and day-to-day concerns of individual single parents in the Army.

CASE STUDIES OF OFFICER AND ENLISTED PARENTS IN THE ARMY:  
PERFORMANCE, RETENTION, AND QUALITY OF LIFE

CONTENTS

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	Page
INTRODUCTION . . . . .	1
REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE . . . . .	3
METHODS . . . . .	6
RESULTS . . . . .	9
Statistical Overview . . . . .	10
Officer Case Studies . . . . .	14
Summary: Officer Case Studies . . . . .	24
Enlisted Case Studies . . . . .	26
Summary: Enlisted Case Studies . . . . .	38
Differences between Officer and Enlisted Single Parents . . . . .	39
CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS . . . . .	40
REFERENCES . . . . .	47
APPENDIX A. SUPERVISOR'S INTERVIEW PROTOCOL . . . . .	A-1
B. SINGLE PARENT'S INTERVIEW PROTOCOL . . . . .	B-1

LIST OF TABLES

Table 1. Sex and career status of single parents sampled . . . . .	9
2. Performance ratings by supervisors . . . . .	11
3. Supervisor's retention recommendations . . . . .	11

**CASE STUDIES OF OFFICER AND ENLISTED SINGLE PARENTS IN THE ARMY:  
PERFORMANCE, RETENTION, AND QUALITY OF LIFE**

**INTRODUCTION**

Family issues are increasingly being recognized as legitimate areas of concern for both rank and file soldiers and decision makers at the highest levels of the Army community. The Chief of Staff of the Army gave impetus to this new emphasis on families when he made military families the subject of his White Paper in 1983. The White Paper called upon the military establishment to recognize the diversity of families within the military and anticipate and respond to the needs of new and emerging family structures. Single parent families, the subject of this report, represent one of the nontraditional family forms whose lifestyle, needs, and implications for the military need to be addressed.

The number of single parents in both the military and civilian population has increased dramatically in the last few years, and this trend is expected to continue. Census Bureau statistics indicate that the number of single parent families in the United States increased 107% between 1970 and 1980, and that by 1984 fully 26% of all families with children under the age of 18 were headed by single parents. Demographers predict that one out of every three families, and possibly even one out of every two will be headed by a single parent in 1990 (Newsweek, July 15, 1986).

Current estimates, within the military, place the number of single parents in the Army at about 30,000, representing 4% of the total active force. The majority of these single parents are men (almost 23,000), although proportionately, women are more than twice as likely as men to end up with sole responsibility for children. Ten percent of all enlisted women and 6.5% of all female officers are single parents, compared to 3.4% and 2.8% for the male enlisted and officer populations, respectively.

The 4% of the Army population currently classified as single parents represents a significant number of soldiers in and of itself. However, in evaluating the need for research and programs aimed at single parents, it is important to note that a much higher number of soldiers stand to benefit from these efforts. Three factors suggest that considerably more than 4% of the Army population actually functions as a single parent at some point during their careers. First, the estimates of the number of single parents is a static statistic. Single parenthood, on the other hand, is probably best described as a more dynamic, transitory state. According to Orthner (1980), most single parents in the military remarry, generally within 2 to 3 years after becoming single parents. Therefore, even if the rate of single parenthood stays the same, the 4% who will make up the single parent group in a few years are not likely to be the same individuals who are single parents today. We cannot yet predict what proportion of soldiers will become single parents over the course of their careers; however, we know that the total percentage is higher than the number of single parents counted at any one point in time.

A second factor is that the 4% figure includes only soldiers who are officially designated as sole custodians of dependent children. Service

members who are separated from their spouses, but not yet divorced, are not counted among the numbers of single parents; nor are parents who have temporary, partial (e.g., summer vacations), or unofficial custody of their children. Similarly, married soldiers whose spouses are temporarily absent due to illness, family emergencies, or relocations, are left to function temporarily as single parents, but are not counted among their numbers.

The third group of people who share many of the problems of single parents are dual career couples, particularly dual military career couples, where both spouses are in the service. Dual military career soldiers comprise approximately 5% of the married population of the Army. In these families, as in single parent families, it is a soldier who must attend to day care arrangements, coordinating schedules and transportation, and day-to-day, as well as the unexpected (e.g., accidents, illness), needs of children. Two parent families in contrast with single parent families, have a measure of flexibility, in that the spouse with the least demanding schedule can assume these duties. Often, however, field exercises, travel requirements, alerts, extra duty, and unanticipated job demands make at least one parent unavailable to respond to family needs. The remaining spouse in the dual career family is then faced with the same constraints and dilemmas single parent soldiers experience. The fact that soldiers in a variety of family situations may occasionally experience the demands of single parenthood suggests that research aimed at furthering our understanding of the single parent lifestyle will have benefits which reach far beyond the soldiers who are counted as single parents at any one point in time.

Military concerns with regard to the single parent issues are focused in three distinct areas: the quality of life experienced by single parents and their families, the retention of single parent soldiers, and the impact of single parent status on individual performance and deployability. Quality of life concerns were highlighted by the Chief of Staff of the Army when he stated, in the 1983 White Paper, that "the Army can and must assure, within available resources and commitments, adequate care for families of its members." This mandate is based on the philosophy that a partnership exists between the Army and Army families, and that "the nature of the commitment of the service member dictates to the Army a moral obligation to support their families" (White Paper 1983: The Army Family).

Related to the quality of life issue is the concern that highly qualified and productive service members may choose to leave the Army because of the hardship associated with being a single parent in the Army. Institutional systems, both employers and service providers, typically fail to recognize single parent families as legitimate or viable systems (Thompson & Gongla, 1983). As a result of their assumptions about what the family ought to be, namely a nuclear traditional family, programs are generally ill-equipped to provide relevant supportive services to variant family forms (Thompson & Gongla, 1983). To the extent that voluntary separations of single parents are due to the lack of institutional and social supports the Army might easily provide, the loss of highly qualified personnel might be reduced.

The possible impact of single parent status on individual performance and troop readiness constitutes a third area of concern. Aware of the potential conflict between the needs of families and the Army, a number of commanders and policy makers have expressed concern that single parent status has a

negative impact on performance and deployability (U.S. General Accounting Office (GAO), 1982). This concern, as well as the quality of life and retention issues, is addressed in the current report.

#### REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

The major study to date of single parents in the Army was undertaken by the General Accounting Office in 1982. The GAO determined through an evaluation of Army studies, surveys, and policies, that the Army did not have adequate, reliable data on which to base policy decisions concerning sole and dual military career parents. To remedy the situation they developed a survey designed to determine the expected availability of single and dual military parents in the event of war or national emergency, and how their attendance, performance, and expected availability compared with that of other service members.

Thirty Active Army units (6 combat, 2 combat-support, and 22 combat service-support units) from Germany and Ft. Bragg, North Carolina, were selected for participation in the GAO survey. Germany and Ft. Bragg were chosen because U.S. Army, Europe (USAEUR), and Forces Command (particularly Ft. Bragg) had expressed particular concern over the readiness of single parents to deploy. Units were selected for participation in the survey to ensure that those most likely to be affected by a deployment (highly mobile units or those required to mobilize early) would be represented. Within these units, supervisors of single parents were asked to evaluate the performance and readiness of two subordinates: a single or dual Army career parent and a comparison subordinate (not a single or dual career parent) with the same rank, MOS, or sex. Supervisors of 119 single parents completed performance questionnaires for the target group (single parents) and comparison group (not single or dual military career parents). The single parents evaluated were nearly all enlisted personnel (only 7% of the combined single and dual career parent samples were officers), and about 80% had completed 4 or more years of military service.

The results indicated that single parents were rated less positively than the comparison group in some areas, but that on the whole their performance was satisfactory. In terms of attendance, the GAO survey found that at least 90% of the single parents in the sample were identified as never or only occasionally late for duty, daily formation, and alerts and never or only occasionally unable to participate in shift work, field exercises, and temporary duty travel (GAO, 1982, p. 7). Comparison group members, however, were less likely than single parents to be late for duty or unable to participate in shift work. Single parents also tended to take more than the average amount of time off for personal reasons, yet the percentage of single parents who took "much more" time off than average was still low (8-9%). In assessing readiness, researchers found that 10% of the single parents were rated as being somewhat or very likely not to report for duty at all in the event of a war, whereas only 5% of those who were not single or dual military career parents were deemed unlikely to report as required.

In terms of day-to-day job performance, single parent ratings were comparable to those of other service members. Eighty-five percent of the single parents and 86% of the comparison group were given ratings ranging from

"slightly above average" to "at the very top" on the performance dimension, "quality of work done." Ratings were also comparable between groups for "amount of work done," "contribution to morale or efficiency of others," "overall job performance," and "incidences of behavioral problems." The percentages of soldiers who would be recommended for retention by their supervisors were also similar for the single/dual career parents groups and the control group.

In summary, the GAO report concluded that the majority of single parents were performing at least satisfactorily in their jobs. Furthermore, of the single parents identified for the GAO survey, nearly all had at least a high school education and were in one of the top three mental categories (95%). Most also had at least 4 years of military service, and about 25% were in occupational skills for which payment of enlistment and reenlistment bonuses were authorized. From this data, the GAO concluded that single parents demographically represent the type of individuals the Army wants to attract and retain in the service. In summarizing the overall findings, the GAO report concluded that policies excluding single parents from service or deployable positions were not warranted.

A second major study dealing with single parent issues was conducted by Orthner (1980). This study dealt with the "gratifications, problems and needs of Air Force families" (Orthner, 1980, p. 5). The total sample of 763 persons included 101 single parents (61 males and 40 females) from 16 bases in the United States and Germany. Nearly all of the single parents surveyed (92%) were in the enlisted ranks, and most (82%) had children under the age of 12 (demographics from Orthner and Bowen, 1982).

Orthner (1980) summed up the overall findings of the study by saying that "concerns about their family stability, work performance, child care arrangements and Air Force commitments appear to be largely unfounded" (p. 13). Specifically, the data indicated that Air Force single parents do not request or receive special work consideration any more than married persons, their average work week (45 hours) is nearly as long as the work week for married men (47 hours) and longer than that of married women (42 hours), and they are just as likely to work extra duty on evenings and weekends.

The concerns of single parents in the Air Force center primarily on inadequate pay and benefits, and family issues, such as too little time spent with their children, disappointment with the quality of child care available, and the lack of support for families on Air Force bases. Base child care facilities, in particular, were a source of dissatisfaction. They were used by only 25% of the single parents, compared with 67% of the married parents, and of the single parents who did use base facilities, most (56%) were dissatisfied with the hours of operation and quality of care. With the exception of child care and family support programs, however, the data indicated that single parents were generally more satisfied than married persons with most aspects of Air Force life. Data on career intentions indicated that the majority of single parents intended to stay in the service; 66% of the married men in the sample, 58% of the single parents, and 43% of the married women report intentions to make the Air Force a career. Job security, satisfaction with pay and benefits, and satisfaction with Air Force management and rules and regulations surfaced as the strongest correlates of the decision to remain in service for the single parent.

In summarizing the findings, Orthner concluded that:

The single parents most likely to have problems are those who have been single parents for less than one year, and those in the lowest ranks. These parents may experience adjustment problems or need assistance in managing their limited resources. But most single parents in the Air Force make these adjustments, establish new supportive relationships, find substitute care for their children, and try to minimize the effects of their single parent status at work (1980, p. 14).

Research designed to focus more specifically on the consequences to employers of child care concerns on the part of employees has been conducted in the civilian sector. In a large, comprehensive study of 5,000 corporate employees with children, Fernandez (1986) found that "a significant majority of the employees agreed that child care problems exact a high price in unproductive use of employees' minds and time" (p. 14). This was especially true for women and single men. Instances of missed days at work, tardiness, leaving early, and dealing with family issues during working hours were found to be strongly related to employees' difficulties in coping with child care and handling dual family/work roles. In addition to reducing the productivity of parents, Fernandez (1986) believes that child care problems also contribute to turnover in organizations. Many good employees who have been trained at great expense leave organizations when they experience child care problems and turn toward companies that offer more reasonable and progressive child care policies and benefits. It is logical to assume that this type of attrition occurs in the Army as well, especially among single parents, the group most likely to experience child care problems and work/family conflicts.

In summary, contrary to the expectations of some military commanders and policy makers, the limited amount of empirical data on single parents in the military shows them to be adjusting quite well to their dual responsibilities. Job performance is affected only in limited areas, and personal satisfaction as well as satisfaction with the military is quite high. As noted, however, empirical data on single parents in the military is limited, and data on civilian employees with children (both married and single) indicate that child care concerns do intrude on the work lives of both married women and male single parents. Employee stress, diminished productivity, and undesirable turnover appear to be possible consequences of job/family conflicts involving children.

The current study was undertaken in order to get a clearer picture of how single parenthood affects individuals in the Army. It is clear that single parents are required to shoulder additional family responsibilities, but it is not clear how these additional burdens affect the performance, quality of life, and career decisions of soldiers. The in-depth interviews conducted with 27 soldiers and their supervisors shed light on the variety of problems single parents encounter, the different ways various individuals cope with the demands of single parenthood, and the factors that affect performance, satisfaction, and career intentions.

## METHODS

### Procedure

Early in 1985, authorization was obtained from the Army's Forces Command to interview eight single parents and their immediate supervisors at each of four Army posts. A point of contact at each post (Ft. Carson, Ft. Bragg, Ft. Polk, and Ft. Hood) was requested to identify and schedule for interview eight single parents, including: two male officers, two female officers, two male enlisted, and two female enlisted personnel. At the same time, separate interviews were scheduled with the immediate supervisors of these single parents. Individuals meeting the selection criteria were generally contacted in the order in which their names appeared on the master personnel files. No effort was made to ensure that the sample was truly randomly selected or representative of the single parent population in the Army. The sampling procedure was designed to ensure that an adequate number of soldiers from each enlisted/officer, male/female subgroup were interviewed, resulting in oversampling in the female and officer single-parent population relative to their actual proportions in the Army.

The duration of the interviews ranged from 1 to 2-1/2 hours. The interviews were conducted by trained researchers from the Army Research Institute (ARI) and took place in private offices where participants were assured of the confidentiality of the data. It was emphasized to both single parents and supervisors that none of the information they provided would be traceable back to them, or included in their personnel records. Identical questions were asked of the officer and enlisted respondents. The only difference between the officer and enlisted questionnaires (both for single parents and supervisors) consisted of the reference to officers as "officers" and enlisted personnel as "soldiers," in their respective questionnaires.

### Measures: Supervisors' Interview/Questionnaire

Nearly all the items in the supervisors' questionnaire were taken from the GAO (1982) survey. However, in most cases, the items stems or response alternatives were modified for the present questionnaire to encourage supervisors to compare the single parents they were rating with other soldiers in the unit who had similar responsibilities. Specific items are described below. (See Appendix A for copies of the supervisory data collection instrument.)

Performance. A number of measures of job performance were used in the current study. For most items, supervisors were asked to compare the individuals they were rating to others in the unit with similar responsibilities. The first set of items asked supervisors to compare the single parents they were rating to others in the unit in regard to how often they were late and how often they were unable to participate in field exercises, TDY, alerts, daily formation, shift work, duty, and extra duty. A 5-point frequency scale provided the response alternatives for these questions. When problems were indicated, supervisors were asked for their feelings about the situation, what they thought was causing the problem, and what impact it had on the unit. Supervisors were also asked to rate single parents' performance in seven job areas (field exercises, TDY, etc.) using another 5-point scale (1=at the very

top, 2=above average, 3=average, 4=below average, 5=at the very bottom). Next supervisors were asked to compare the person they were rating to others in terms of the amount of time taken off for "sudden and unexpected emergencies," "emergency leave for an extended period," and "personal telephone calls during duty hours." Overall job performance was measured by comparing the single parents to others in terms of "quality of work done," "amount of work done," "contribution to the morale of others," and "overall job performance." Supervisors were also asked to indicate how frequently each of 12 job-related behaviors (e.g., performs satisfactorily, accepts responsibility, works well with coworkers) was displayed by the soldier being rated. A similar checklist of 12 problem behaviors (e.g., use of drugs, control of temper, emotional withdrawal) was also rated in terms of the frequency of occurrence of the behavior. The incidence, causes, and impacts of any behavioral problems were explored through open-ended interview questions. Finally, supervisors were asked to give the soldier an overall quality rating on a scale of "0" to "99," and to rate the soldier (using a 5-point "very poor" to "very good" scale) on: (1) performance, compared to all others supervised; (2) motivation, compared to all others supervised; (3) contribution you would expect this soldier to make to his/her unit; and (4) the kind of example this soldier sets for his/her unit.

Deployability. Deployability was measured by asking how likely it was that the person being rated would "report in a timely manner" and "not report for duty at all" in the event of war. A 5-point scale ranging from "much more likely (than others)" to "much less likely" was used in these questions.

Retainability. Supervisor's recommendations concerning the desirability of retaining the individual in the Army were solicited using three different items. One item asked: "If you had to make a recommendation about this soldier [or "officer" in the case of the officers' questionnaire] right now, how strongly, if at all, would you recommend that this soldier be allowed to continue on active duty (at present grade level)?" Response alternatives ranged from "strongly recommend continuation" to "strongly recommend continuation be denied." A similar question asked: "When comparing this soldier to other soldiers would you be more or less likely to recommend continuation on active duty for this soldier?" Response alternatives ranged from "much more likely to recommend continuation" to "much less likely to recommend continuation." The final retention item asked: "Should this soldier be retained in the Army?" (with a 5-point "definitely not" to "definitely yes" response scale), and "Why do you think this?"

#### Measures: Single Parent Interview/Questionnaire

Most measures on the single parent questionnaire were adapted from the GAO (1982) and Orthner (1980) studies. Open-ended interview questions were also included to explore several issues in more depth. (See Appendix B for copies of the single parent data collection instrument.)

Performance. Single parents were asked to rate their own performance in the following areas: lateness, inability to participate, time off, quality and amount of work done, contribution to the morale of others, and over all job performance. The items and scales used for the self-evaluations were identical to those used for the supervisory evaluations of performance.

Deployability. The two deployment items from the supervisor's questionnaire were used to assess single parents' deployability, supplemented by a number of open-ended questions concerning arrangements for children in the event of deployment.

Career Intentions/Satisfaction with the Army. Career intentions were assessed by asking single parents to check one of seven possible career options (ranging from "stay in the Army until retirement" to "definitely leave before the end of present enlistment"). Reasons for the decision, including whether or not being a single parent was a factor, were then solicited by the interviewer. Satisfaction with the Army was measured using a 5-point satisfaction scale and two open-ended questions asking: "What about the Army makes you satisfied [dissatisfied]?"

Family Concerns/Quality of Life. Items pertaining to quality of life and family concerns consisted of both closed- and open-ended items. First, child care arrangements, satisfaction with these arrangements, and advantages and problems of child care provisions were addressed. Next single parents were asked to rate their happiness with their family life and talk about why they were happy or unhappy. Finally, single parents were asked to use 5-point scales to rate seven types of people (e.g., friends, parents, supervisor, ex-spouse) in terms of the amount of emotional support and encouragement for raising their children they received from them, and how close they felt toward each. Two open-ended questions about dating and social life were also included.

Feelings about Being a Single Parent in the Army. This last group of items consist of open-ended questions covering: (1) how the Army feels about and treats single parents; (2) the impact of single parenthood on job performance and careers; (3) general thought about being a single parent and problems experienced; and (4) thoughts about Army policies and ways the Army could improve the lives of single parents.

#### Description of the Sample

Military Characteristics. The 27 single parents in our sample were evenly distributed across the four posts: Ft. Bragg (N=7), Ft. Carson (N=7), Ft. Hood (N=6), and Ft. Polk (N=7). Twelve in the sample were officers, and 15 were enlisted personnel. Of the officers, eight were female and only four were male, while the enlisted personnel consisted of six females and nine males (see Table 1). The original sampling plans called for equal numbers of people in each sub-group; the final sample indicates that male officers were the least likely of the four single parent sub-groups to be available for interviews. As noted earlier, the number of people in each sub-group was not intended to reflect the distribution of single parents in the Army (where the overwhelming majority are enlisted males), but rather to ensure that at last a few people in each category were heard (see Table 1).

The officers in the sample were mostly captains (N=4) and first lieutenants (N=4), while the enlisted members were mostly E-5's (N=4), E-6's (=5), and E-7's (N=3). All the females were in Combat Support or Combat Service Support units, while almost half of the men were in Combat units. Time in the

Table 1

## Sex and Career Status of Single Parents Sampled

	Enlisted (N)	Officer (N)	Total (N)
Male	9	4	13
Female	6	8	14
Total	15	12	27

Army averaged about 9 years for the sample, as a whole, and was quite evenly distributed across the range of 2 to 19 years in service.

Personal Characteristics. Although most in the sample were white (N=14), blacks were well represented (N=11), and one Hispanic was included. The minorities were concentrated in the enlisted group; only two officers were non-white. Ages ranged from 23 to 45 and the average age of respondents was 32. In terms of education, all of the enlisted personnel had at least a high school diploma, five had some college, and one was a college graduate. All but one of the officers had completed college (the two Warrant Officers included in the officer group had not). Of the males in the sample, all but two were single parents as a result of divorce. The exceptions were a widower and a man who had never been married but had recently received custody of his child. Of the 14 women in the sample, 9 were divorced and 5 had never been married (2 officers, 3 enlisted). Five people lived on post, and the rest lived off post in civilian housing.

Most of the single parents had only one (N=15) or two (N=10) children in their custody. Twelve of the parents (including all 5 of the never married women) required day care for one or more pre-schoolers, and 12 parents had young school age children (between the ages of 6 and 10) who required supervision on a daily basis. A small minority had only older children who did not necessarily require formally arranged supervision on a daily basis. All parents, however, shared the problem of providing care for their children when their schedules required overtime, shift work, field exercises, alerts, or TDY.

## RESULTS

The results are divided into three sections: (1) Statistical Overview; (2) Officers Case Studies; and (3) Enlisted Personnel Case Studies. The first section, presented below, considers the sample as a whole and gives an overview of the data, including frequencies on selected items. It should be noted, however, that because of the limited sample size (N=27) and nonrandom selection of respondents, the data presented may not be representative of the population of single parents in the Army. The purpose in presenting the statistical data is not to encourage generalization, but rather to offer an

overview of the characteristics of the group of people we are discussing in more detail in the two sections that follow.

In the section presenting the officer and enlisted case studies individuals are grouped according to performance levels. Cases within each performance category are discussed individually in order to portray the variety of situations encountered by single parents in the Army. Then in the summaries, cases are compared across performance categories in an attempt to identify variables which may account for differences in the performances, satisfaction, career intentions, and concerns of single parents.

### Statistical Overview

#### Supervisory Ratings

Performance, Deployability, Retention. As discussed in the Method section, a number of different measures of job performance were included on the supervisor's questionnaire/interview; some tapping more global aspects of performance and some assessing the frequency of occurrence of particular job-related behaviors. Despite the differences in the types of items, however, the performance measures were generally highly intercorrelated. The exceptions occurred for items on which there was very little variability or where response alternatives were given different meanings by different supervisors. Items with especially low variability included those concerning lateness, inability to participate, and deployment readiness. Supervisors reported almost no problems in these areas. Only 3 individuals out of 27 were rated as being late more frequently than others, and only 2 were more frequently unable to participate in required duties (specifically daily formations and shift work). Similarly, on the deployment items, only three individuals were viewed as either less likely to report for duty in the event of war or less likely to report in a timely manner. The second factor affecting item statistics and intercorrelations was related to the different response sets of the supervisors interviewed. The middle of the five response alternatives for those items comparing the soldier to others in the unit was "about the same." This was intended to reflect average performance. In several cases, however, supervisors told the interviewer that "no one is ever late in my unit" or "all my officers will deploy." In these cases, some supervisors rated the soldier who was never late as "about the same as others," while other supervisors categorized a soldier with a similar record as "much less likely than others" to be late (reflecting his/her superior performance in a more general context).

Because of these discrepancies, individual questionnaire items often did not reliably distinguish superior from average performers within the sample.

Overall, supervisors rated the single parents in this study quite positively. As noted above, very few single parents were reported to have problems in the areas of lateness, time off, or deployability. Similarly, in terms of the various performance dimensions included in the survey, most single parents were rated as being either "above average" or "at the very top" (see Table 2). Single parents' ratings of their own performance were, on the average, higher than the supervisory ratings, but the two sets of ratings were moderately correlated (correlation coefficients ranged from .41 to .51).

Consistent with the generally favorable performance ratings, 73% of the supervisors said they would "strongly recommend" that the individuals they were rating be retained in the Army (see Table 3). (For Tables 2 and 3, because of missed values in the data, the total number of respondents for an item is sometimes fewer than the total N of 27.)

Table 2

Performance Ratings by Supervisors

	Quality of Work Done		Amount of Work Done		Contribution to Morale		Overall Job Performance	
	%	(N)	%	(N)	%	(N)	%	(N)
1. At the Very Top	27	(7)	27	(7)	19	(5)	27	(7)
2. Above Average	50	(13)	42	(11)	42	(11)	35	(9)
3. Average	14	(4)	19	(5)	23	(6)	27	(7)
4. Below Average	8	(2)	12	(3)	12	(3)	12	(3)
5. At the Very Bottom	0	(0)	0	(0)	4	(1)	0	(0)

Note: Because of the missed values in the data, the total number of respondents for an item is sometimes fewer than the total N of 27.

Table 3  
Supervisor's Retention Recommendations

	%	(N)
1. Strongly Recommend Retention	73	(19)
2. Moderately Recommend Retention	12	(3)
3. Undecided	4	(1)
4. Moderately Recommend Retention be Denied	8	(2)
5. Strongly Recommend Retention be Denied	4	(1)

Note: Item was worded as follows: "If you had to make a recommendation about this soldier right now, how strongly, if at all, would you recommend that this officer be allowed to continue on active duty (at present grade level)?"

In general, single parents in this study were rated more positively than those in the GAO (1982) study. However, differences in sample selection procedures, sample composition (e.g., GAO study: 93% enlisted, vs. our study: 56% enlisted), and phrasing of the items make any direct comparison of limited value.

## Single Parents Self-Reports

Career Intention, Satisfaction. The majority of the single parents in the sample intended to remain in the Army until retirement (N=16) or serve at least one additional tour after completion of their present obligations (N=4). Only three people definitely intended to leave the service. The most commonly cited reason for wanting to stay in the Army was that people liked their jobs and/or Army life (N=10). The security of steady employment, guaranteed income, and good benefits were also mentioned frequently (N=9) as reasons for staying in the Army. The factors which led people to consider leaving the Army were more varied and fewer in number. Several of the reasons listed involved hardships related to raising and caring for children, and a small percentage of people disliked their jobs or Army life in general.

Career/family conflicts were experienced to some degree by nearly everyone in the sample, but very few people reported that single parent status had directly hurt their careers. For more than half the respondents, however, being a single parent had been a factor in their career decisions. In nine cases, single parent status had been a negative factor, leading the individual to at least consider leaving the service. Frequent absences from children and the lack of flexibility with regard to schedules and assignments were the most frequently mentioned problems. Five people, on the other hand, said that their single parent status was a positive factor in their decision to stay, primarily because they needed the job security and steady income afforded by the Army.

General comments regarding career/family conflicts focused primarily on ways the responsibilities of single parenthood left single parents less able to compete for promotions, or single-mindedly pursue their careers. Constraining factors included: limits on the amount of extra time available for work (e.g., not being able to stay late or put in as much overtime as others), fewer opportunities to further education (difficulties in attending night courses, or off-site training), and their inability or unwillingness to leave children to take part in social functions expected of an officer. A small percentage of people also indicated that while they currently experienced few career/family conflicts, they would reconsider their commitment of an Army career if future assignments required long absences from their children.

All in all, as the data on career intentions suggest, the single parents in this study were quite satisfied with the Army (70% satisfied or very satisfied). Job challenges, career opportunities, and the Army way of life (e.g., discipline, conforming to high standards) were the most frequently mentioned reasons for satisfaction, followed by factors like job security, income, and benefits. The lack of sex discrimination and the opportunity to serve one's country were also mentioned. The things people found dissatisfying were quite varied. The only factor mentioned by more than two people was promotion policies (N=3). Other complaints ranged from the everyday facts of Army life (possibility of deployment, frequent moves, PT, etc.) to problems common to most large organizations (bureaucracy, red tape, playing politics). It was interesting to note that, statistically, ratings of satisfaction with the Army were not related to self-ratings of performance, but were positively correlated with performance ratings from supervisors.

Child Care Arrangements. A surprisingly small number of people in our sample (N=2) used the post day care facilities to care for their children. Most parents reported that post facilities opened too late and/or closed too early to accommodate their work schedules. One parent who did use post day care, for example, had to have his children wait for him in the car while he went to PT in the morning because the day care center was not yet open. Another problem was that post day care centers make no provisions for emergencies; they won't care for a sick child or accommodate unexpected schedule changes or overtime requirements. Several people also complained about the poor staff/child ratio. The only advantage of post day care centers seemed to be their relatively low cost and the presence of other children.

Most parents with small children sent their children to a private babysitter's home (N=9). Others used off-post day care centers (N=2) or had a relative, roommate, or housekeeper who lived in and took care of the children at home (N=3). This latter arrangement appeared to be the most satisfactory, although it had its drawbacks in terms of cost and loss of privacy. Parents reported that the ideal child care arrangement would be flexible enough to accommodate long hours and schedule changes, would accept children when they were sick, and would provide overnight care when required.

Opinions concerning whether or not the Army was a good environment in which to raise children were mixed. About one quarter of the sample thought it was a good environment, one third thought it was not, and the remainder said it was neither good nor bad.

Quality of Life/Family Concerns. Despite the stress inherent in ensuring that their children were adequately cared for, most single parents reported that they were happy with their family life (N=19). Reasons for satisfaction focused primarily on having a good relationship with children, or having a steady boyfriend/girlfriend and/or plans for marriage. The individuals who reported being neutral or unhappy (N=8) most often gave time pressures (e.g., too little time for kids and/or self) or loneliness as reasons. Statistically, satisfaction with family life was moderately correlated with satisfaction with the Army ( $r=.40$ ) but unrelated to satisfaction with child care arrangements.

In terms of support, the single parents in our study received little financial or emotional support from their children's other parents. Only four individuals received any financial support, and almost three-fourths reported that they received little or no emotional support and encouragement from the other parent. It was especially rare for men to report that they were supported emotionally or financially by their former spouses. The primary sources of emotional support for most people were their own parents and local friends. Almost half also received considerable support from their work supervisors and their work associates. The support received by officers and enlisted personnel, however, was not equal. In general, officers reported receiving more support from more sources. For example, almost half of the enlisted personnel said they received no support from their work supervisors for raising their children, while this was true for only 2 of the 12 officers in the sample. Overall, however, the single parents appeared to have a reasonable number of friends and enough social support to meet their basic needs. While several reported feeling lonely at times or noted it was

difficult to fit in socially with other groups, the majority were happy with their family and personal lives.

Deployment. Every single parent interviewed indicated that he or she was ready to deploy if called to war. All but 1 of the 27 supervisors agreed with this assessment. More specifically, all 15 of the enlisted single parents and their supervisors indicated that they were equally or more likely than others in the unit to deploy in the event of war or national emergency. One enlisted single parent and one supervisor did say that a particular single parent would be less likely than others to report on time.

Among the officers, all 12 single parents said that they would report for duty as required in the event of deployment, although 1 individual said that he was less likely than others in the unit to report on time. Among the supervisors of single parent officers, 2 of the 12 said the single parent they were rating was less likely to be on time, and one supervisor said that the officer in question was more likely, than others, not to report at all. This same supervisor, however, appeared to be basing his evaluation on a general opinion that many single parents would opt for their children instead of their duty if faced with a deployment situation. He rated the single parent he supervised as being very good to excellent in every other respect and noted that she was an effective and dedicated officer who should be retained in the Army.

In addition to giving positive ratings regarding the likelihood of deploying relative to others, most single parents and their supervisors added that there was no question in their minds in absolute terms that they would fulfill their obligations. The single parents had confidence in their obligations. The single parents had confidence in their dependent care plans, and overwhelmingly indicated that they were ready and willing to serve their country as required.

Statistical Overview Summary. In summary, the majority of single parents in our sample received above average performance ratings and strong recommendations that they be retained in the Army. In addition, both single parents and their supervisors were overwhelmingly positive about the readiness of single parents to deploy in the event of war or national emergency. The majority of single parents were also happy in the Army and intended to make the Army a career. Few parents found post day care centers helpful, but nearly all had managed to make satisfactory child care arrangements. The best arrangements were those that were flexible in terms of hours and included provisions for emergency and overnight care. Most single parents relied on parents and friends for their support networks, and officers, but not enlisted personnel, received considerable support from supervisors and work associates. While time pressures, loneliness, and lack of opportunities to socialize were often mentioned as problems, most of the respondents appeared to have adjusted very well to the conflicting demands of single parenthood and Army life.

#### Officer Case Studies

The single parent officers in our sample can be roughly grouped into one of four categories of overall performance: "Outstanding/at the top" (N=3),

"Above average/very good" (N=3), "Average/to above average" (N=3), and "Below average" (N=2). Eleven officers are discussed in this section. The twelfth officer in the sample is not included here because her supervisor was not available for an interview.

In this section, the interview and questionnaire data on the individuals in each performance category are discussed. Particular attention is focused on the unique problems of each individual and the factors that affect their performance, career intentions, and general quality of life. Individuals in the "Outstanding" category are discussed first.

### Outstanding/At the Very Top

The three officers in this performance category include two captains and a warrant officer. All three love their work and intend to stay in the Army until retirement; however, the two male officers are very dissatisfied with the Army's lack of responsiveness to their family concerns.

Captain A. Captain A, 33, has been a single parent for 2 years, and has custody of two children, ages 6 and 9. He has been in the Army for 15 years and plans to stay in until retirement. He would not, however, recommend the Army today to someone who wants a family.

Captain A was rated as being "at the very top" in every aspect of his job performance. Performance in his case is critical, because of the nature of his job and the high visibility it entails. He is currently an "emergency action officer," responsible for overseeing nuclear weapons release procedures and inspecting and providing assistance to numerous weapon sites. His skills and expertise are unique and highly valued by his supervisor. Captain A attributes his success on the job to personal values that require that he do everything possible to ensure that his mission is accomplished.

Surprisingly, in light of his superior performance and dedication, Captain A reports being very disillusioned with the Army. He expects to remain in the service until he can retire in 5 years, but his decision is based on practical reasons and retirement benefits rather than commitment. The source of his disappointment with the Army is his perception that the Army fails to consider or value the soldier's role as a family member. His primary complaint is that certain commanders are allowed, sometimes encouraged, to require their personnel to devote an unreasonable amount of time to work. The excessive overtime he was required to put in when he was a company commander (14- to 16-hour days) did not appear, to him, to be essential to mission accomplishment, but rather to be a result of poor management and/or the commander's desire to impress a "higher-up." Because Captain A felt a need to spend time with his two children, he jeopardized his career by voluntarily giving up his command. He is much happier with his present job and finds the time requirement reasonable, even with the extensive travel involved. He has been advised, however, that he will need to take a command in Germany for 2 years if he wants to "get his career back in shape." This move would require that he leave his children with his parents for 2 years, a prospect he faces reluctantly and with some bitterness toward the Army.

In his present position Captain A is coping quite ably with the demands of raising two children. He has a live-in housekeeper who takes care of the children and the house, and this enables him to put in long hours and travel when necessary. He feels that the high cost and loss of privacy associated with having live-in help are well worth the convenience and peace of mind this arrangement affords.

Captain A is also fortunate in having a strong support network. He receives a lot of emotional support for raising his children from both sets of grandparents, and has several close, supportive friends in the area. In addition, his current supervisor allows him the time flexibility he requires to take care of the needs of his family. His own resourcefulness is also a factor in his successful adjustment. Captain A is the only single parent interviewed who had sought out and joined a local chapter of Parents without Partners. He has also been able to find an understanding Army administrator to help him sort through the maze of Army policies and regulations pertinent to his situation. He said that having someone on your side who knows the system is invaluable.

Captain A had two recommendations to make concerning ways the Army could improve the life of single parent families. First and foremost he suggested that the Army establish reasonable limits on the number of work hours required. Second, he suggested that babysitters be authorized to live in government housing if they are serving as live-in housekeeper/day care providers, and that they be allowed to use post facilities (e.g., PX, medical facilities) for the dependents they are caring for.

Warrant Officer D. Warrant Officer D is another officer whose performance is described as outstanding. Yet, he too has found the Army to be unresponsive to the personal needs of single parents. Mr. D., 26, is a Cobra helicopter pilot, formally designated as "Pilot in Command," in charge of mission and aircraft in his unit. His job is very demanding, requiring that he be away on field exercises or TDY 3 to 4 months each year, but the travel requirement has not dampened his enthusiasm for his work. According to his supervisor, Mr. D's performance is exemplary; he ranks "at the very top" in every area, and is considered the best pilot in the unit. His captain, of course, strongly recommends that he be retained, and in fact thinks that he should seek a direct commission as a regular officer.

Mr. D has been in the Army 9 years and intends to stay until retirement. He loves his job, is dedicated to mission accomplishment, and enjoys Army life, but is very disappointed with the support he gets from the Army. He is particularly upset about the requirement that warrant officers go to Korea after a stateside tour. He has requested that he be allowed one more stateside tour before Korea (an option available to commissioned officers but not to warrant officers) so that his son will at least be school age before he has to leave him. But despite the fact that there is a waiting list of Cobra pilots who want to go to Korea, his superiors have not been willing to consider his extenuating circumstances. He reports that the Department of the Army's attitude is that being a single parent is his problem, and if he can't handle it he should get married. Mr. D's resentment toward the Army for their lack of concern is compounded because he feels that he gives 100% to the Army.

Despite his feelings about the Army's position, Mr. D is very satisfied with both his child care arrangements and his life in general. He owns a home which he shares with two good friends, both fellow pilots. Day care for his son poses no problem because he has found a babysitter who takes his son into her home and treats him like her own. She is very flexible about time and has grown accustomed to the demands of military life. Mr. D's work situation also facilitates his efforts to meet his family obligations. His job, when he is on post, affords him the flexibility he needs to take time off during the day to be with his son when he is sick, or get him to appointments. He also has a very close relationship with his work group and work supervisor, and these colleagues will bend over backwards to help out if he needs it. His best friends, both before and since he has become a single parent, are in his unit. Although he receives no support from his former spouse, he feels very close to her parents, as well as his own, and can count on family in the event of an emergency or deployment.

Mr. D's suggestion for the Army is that they reconsider the inflexibility on certain Army assignment policies. He feels that it is unreasonable to force a single parent with a young child to accept an unaccompanied tour.

Captain T. Captain T is the third officer identified as an outstanding performer by her supervisor. Her specialty is communications/electronics, and she is currently serving as a company commander in a signal company. In addition to giving her excellent ratings, her supervisor praised her leadership skills, motivation, and genuine concern for her troops.

Captain T has been in the Army for 12 years (only 7 years active) and intends to stay in the Army until she retires. She is very satisfied with the Army, and has found in her career the opportunity to self-actualize professionally.

Captain T is also very satisfied with her child care arrangements. Her daughter goes to a private school, then is picked up by her babysitter who keeps her, feeds her dinner, and will put her to bed if Captain T has to work especially late. She feels that her daughter is in good hands; well cared for and loved by the babysitter, and receiving an excellent education at her private school. Financial support from her former husband helps with the cost of these arrangements and her former husband would take care of their daughter in the event of deployment. In terms of family life and emotional support Captain T also feels very fulfilled. Friends, family, and work associates are all very supportive, and she is engaged to be married in the near future.

There are only two suggestions Captain T had concerning ways the Army could make her life easier: establish longer, more flexible day care hours, and make on-post schools available to people who live off post.

Summary. The three individuals identified as outstanding performers have a number of things in common. All three enjoy their work and are dedicated to their professions. They each enjoy the support of their supervisors and work group, and have a measure of flexibility in terms of the hours they keep and the ability to take time off when needed. All three also report having the support of both their families and a number of close friends in the area. In addition, each of these officers has found a babysitter who is flexible in terms of hours and emergency care, and treat the children as though they were

her own. Contingency child care plans in the event of deployment all involve close relatives and appear to be well thought out and practical.

All three of the top performing officers intend to stay in the Army until retirement. However, Captain A and Warrant Officer D are unhappy with the Army, viewing decision makers as being unreasonably inflexible with regard to assignments and unconcerned with their needs as single parents. Captain T, on the other hand, does not have any complaints about her treatment by the Army and does not foresee any problems meeting Army requirements. Future studies may better determine which attitude is more prevalent among high performing single parent officers in general.

#### Above Average/Very Good Performers

All three of the officers in this performance category are divorced women who have been single parents for at least 3 years. All three would like to stay in the Army, but because of their different circumstances only one is definitely planning to make the Army a career.

Warrant Officer T. Warrant Officer T, 35, is a divorced single parent with a 13-year-old daughter. She has been a single parent for 11 years and in the Army for the past 5 years.

Like Warrant Officer D (one of the outstanding performers) she is a helicopter pilot, although she currently functions primarily as a pilot instructor. She loves her job, and in the words of her supervisor, is a very "dedicated, reliable professional." She would probably have been rated "at the very top" in every area if the people she worked with were not also generally excellent performers.

The only problem Warrant Officer T faces as a single parent is the extensive amount of TDY required in her job (25%). She recently had to send her 13-year-old daughter to stay with her father while she was on REFORGER, and anticipates having to uproot her daughter again while she completes a 4- to 6-month tour in Honduras. Ms. T would like to stay in the Army until retirement, both because she loves her work and because she realizes that the Army needs all its pilot instructors. However, she is presently undecided about making the Army a career because she is concerned about the impact of her absences and the temporary moves on her daughter.

In the other aspects of her life, Ms. T is quite happy. Daily child care has not been a problem because her mother lives with her and her daughter can generally take care of herself. In addition, she has many sources of emotional support, including her mother, the child's father, and her friends at work. Work colleagues and her supervisor help by being flexible with regard to TDY and leave schedules. Close friends support her in her career aspirations, and her former husband cooperates by taking care of their daughter when the need arises. Ms. T likes Army life, feels fortunate in having an excellent commander, and enjoys the benefits and opportunities available to a woman in the Army. She understands that the family separations required by her job are necessary for mission accomplishment, but adds that she has never seen any evidence that the "Year of the Army Family" has been taken seriously.

Captain D. Captain D has two school age children and has been a single parent for 6 years. She is a pediatric nurse practitioner in the Army Nurse Corps and has been in the Army for 8 years. The physician who has supervised and worked with Captain D for almost 2 years rates her above average to excellent in her job, and says that she demonstrates sound judgment and a strong dedication to her work. He would like to see her stay in the Army, but to his considerable disappointment she is being forced out because she has failed to meet the Army's weight standards.

Given a choice, Captain D, herself, would like to stay in the Army. Despite her dissatisfaction with Army promotion and weight-control policies, she is happy with the financial security afforded by the Army and the camaraderie and social support provided by the unit. She has several good friends in the area and feels close to the people in her work group.

Day care is only a problem for Captain D when her schedule is disrupted by occasional shift work. Otherwise, her two children go to a youth activity center after school until she gets home. Some of the problems she has encountered in her 6 years as a single parent in the Army include: having to move away from family and social support systems, inability to adjust her hours when her children are sick, inability to negotiate schedules (e.g., amount of shift work) with employer, inadequate post day care (e.g., short hours, no provisions for sick child), and difficulties finding alternative child care with short notice changes in duty schedule.

Captain D is one of the few single parents who is definitely leaving the Army. She has had her share of work/family conflicts, but her inability to meet weight standards, rather than her single parent status, is the reason she is not making the Army a career.

Captain W. Captain W is the third officer assigned to the above average/very good category. She is 32 years old with a 5-year-old son, and has been a single parent for over 3 years. Captain W is presently assigned to a TRADOC unit, and is not currently classified as deployable. In her job she is responsible for logistic support of the battalion and running the budget. According to her supervisor, Captain W is a very effective and dedicated officer. She performs on par with the others in her unit, and the unit as a whole is excellent. Lateness, absences, and time off have never been a problem. In terms of deployment (should she be reclassified as deployable in the future) Captain W expressed confidence that she would deploy with the others, especially since she wants to stay in the Army. Her supervisor, however, rated her as less likely than the other officers to deploy if required because he felt that she was not sure she would go if child care arrangements were not in place. However, this reservation on the part of the supervisor was not restricted to Captain W. He felt that in the event of war, many single parents would "opt for their children rather than duty," and for this reason he would prefer not to have a single parent in a critical position. In the opinion of Captain W's supervisor, single parenthood was also a career hindrance, because at the higher command levels he felt that a traditional family structure was very important. Yet, in spite of his reservations about single parents, Captain W's supervisor strongly recommended retaining Captain W in the Army because of her effectiveness and dedication.

Captain W likes the Army and intends to make it a career. She especially enjoys the challenges and responsibility involved in her work, and the equal opportunity policies of the Army with regard to women. Furthermore, she believes that the Army is a good environment for her child, and she has been fortunate in finding good, accommodating day care. Before and after kindergarten her son goes to an off-post day care center where they open at 5:45 AM especially for her, and three people at the center will babysit for her when she is on TDY.

In terms of her family life, Captain W is not especially happy at this point, because she had been hoping to avoid a divorce. However, her former husband does still provide her with some financial and emotional support. In addition, she feels supported by her own parents, military friends, and people in her work group. She feels that her work supervisor provides very little support or encouragement, although he thinks highly of her work.

Captain W's recommendations for ways the Army could improve her life include: providing high quality and reasonably priced day care that accommodates the schedules of working parents (especially enlisted personnel who often cannot afford other arrangements), and streamlining medical care so "you don't have to use up half a day for an appointment."

Summary. The three individuals in this performance category have two important things in common. All have good sources of social support, including their work associates (only one, Captain W, does not also have the support of her supervisor); and all would like to stay in the Army. Only Captain W, however, is sure that this is feasible. Captain D is being forced out because of her failure to meet weight standards, and Warrant Officer T may leave because of her concerns about the impact of frequent absences on her daughter.

There was only one supervisor of the officers in the top two performance categories who expressed concern about the impact of single parent status on performance or deployability. This supervisor questioned the readiness of all single parents, suspecting that they might choose to remain with their children in the event of deployment. However, he still believed that his subordinate, Captain W, was a valuable performer and should be retained in the Army.

#### Average to Above Average Performers

The three officers in this performance category include a major with 19 years in service, a 30-year-old female second lieutenant, and a young male first lieutenant. All three report being happy with the Army, although only one individual, the first lieutenant, has no reservations about making the Army a career.

First Lieutenant S. First LT S, 27 years old, has been divorced just over 1 year, and has custody of three children, ages 5, 4, and 2. He is currently serving as the leader of a 30-man platoon in a combat support engineering company. LT S has been in the Army 2 1/2 years and intends to stay in until retirement. He likes the Army, including both the opportunity to serve his country and the standards for performance and self-discipline. He also believes that the Army is a good place to raise children, because it

provides both informal community support and necessary health care. The only thing he does not like about the Army is that he feels that "it's not just your job performance that influences your career, but whether or not someone higher up likes you."

LT S's supervisor sees him as a solid average to above average performer. He does a good job as a platoon leader, displays sound judgment, and has the potential to be a very good officer. For these reasons his supervisor would strongly recommend that he be retained in the Army.

In terms of day care for his children, LT S has found a very flexible, comfortable arrangement. He has a sitter who comes to his house early in the morning to care for the children, and actually moves into the house when he has to go to the field. He feels the arrangement is the best he can have without being married. LT S is also happy with his family life, primarily because he is happy to have custody of the children and they are adjusting well to the divorce. He gets a lot of emotional support from his own and his ex-spouse's parents, his work supervisor, and several friends (especially the chaplain). But LT S also feels that it is hard for a single parent to fit in socially with either single or married people, and many people, men in particular, don't understand his desire to keep his children.

All things considered, however, LT S finds his life quite satisfactory, and seems to have adjusted very well to raising three small children alone. He is optimistic about his future, and only hopes that his single parent status will not hurt his Army career. The only suggestion he has for the Army is that they find a way to enable his child care provider to use dependent services and facilities while he is away.

Second Lieutenant A. Second LT A is not quite as happy with her situation. She has a 6-year-old son and has been a single parent for 2 1/2 years. She recently completed OCS after having spent over 6 years enlisted, and finds that the demands on her time have increased since she became an officer. She is sometimes unhappy about the time she has to be away from her child and the overtime required in the Army (especially as an officer), but accepts these requirements as legitimate. What she does resent, however, is that she is working in a job (motor pool supply officer) that is totally unrelated to her college degree and her enlisted specialty (lab technician). She finds little satisfaction in her current job, and this is the main reason she is undecided about staying in the Army.

In terms of performance, her supervisor notes that she is the most junior officer he has ever supervised and that she is still a "struggling young lieutenant like we all were...." As such, she requires more supervision than most in his unit; however, her supervisor would recommend her for continuation based on the quality of her work and the rate at which she is improving. Her supervisor specifically noted that she does not use her child as a crutch, although LT A herself suspects that her ratings have suffered because she is less likely than others to work extra hours or attend social functions in the evening. She reports that there is pressure on an officer to attend the traditional evening social functions, and LT A resents both the time involved and the expectation that she be "one of the crowd" when her values differ from those with whom she's expected to socialize.

Overall, LT A's current performance is satisfactory, and her supervisor feels that she shows promise as an officer. However, because of her concerns about having too little time for her son and her dissatisfaction with her job, LT A is undecided about making the Army a career.

Major W. Major W, a 43-year-old father of two (ages 5 and 9) has already had a full career in the Army. He has 6 months until retirement and reports that he has enjoyed his 20 years in the Service.

Since he became a single parent 3 years ago, Major W has found the extensive TDY requirements of his job very demanding. He was forced to leave his previous job because of the extensive TDY, and finds the lesser amount of TDY in his present job tolerable only because it is temporary. In terms of job performance Major W's supervisor rates him as average (Major W rates himself somewhat higher) and not as hard-driving as others, attributing this to his upcoming retirement.

Major W gets no support for raising his two sons from his former spouse or the grandparents on either side, but he has developed a strong support network locally. He feels very close to several people in the neighborhood and at work, and has found girl friends and another single parent in the neighborhood to be very helpful and supportive. Day care for the children has also worked out well for Major W, although the cost is substantial. Arrangements consist of pre-school in the morning, and day care in the afternoon for the youngest, and private school, then YMCA for the 9 year old. Costs include not only school tuition and after school care, but also the fee he pays to have someone transport the children.

All in all, Major W rates his situation as satisfactory because he can afford to pay for convenient child care arrangements and because the separations caused by TDY will end when he retires. Had he become a single parent earlier, however, he believes that job/family conflicts might have forced him to give up his Army career.

Summary. Of the three officers rated as good, average performers, two report problems with the amount of time the Army requires them to spend apart from their children. The young first lieutenant did not express any such concerns (perhaps because he is still so early in his career), but for the other two officers job/family conflicts were important career considerations. In addition, one officer thought that her commitment to spend time with her children might be affecting her career potential.

#### Average to Below Average/Performers

The two officers in the lowest performance category are both young women who have never been married. Both report being less than satisfied with their lives and have mixed feelings about the Army.

First Lieutenant J. First Lieutenant J has been in the Army 2 years and has a 16-month-old child. She works as a nurse in the OB/GYN ward where her duties involve administration and patient education. She is on a continuously rotating shift schedule and as a result, her hours change regularly. She finds the shift work problematic in terms of both babysitting arrangements and

the baby's schedule. LT J shows up reliably, however, and her occasional instances of lateness (not seen as a problem by her supervisor) were due to temporary car trouble and not her child.

LT J's performance overall was rated as about average, both in her own estimation and the assessment of her supervisor. Both she and her supervisor noted that she was weak in the area of organizing her time, and her supervisor added that she required additional supervision because she often failed to delegate responsibilities. To her supervisor she appeared to be improving, but because her peers were outstanding, the supervisor thought she had a long way to go before her performance would be equal to theirs. LT J felt that the emotional strain and fatigue attributable to her schedule and her single parent status were probably affecting both her job performance and her morale.

Because she wasn't competitive, given the generally high quality of the Army Nurse Corps, LT J's supervisor could not recommend continuation for her. LT J herself was uncertain about her future. She stated that she liked the Army and would prefer to stay in until retirement, but wasn't sure she could achieve her goal, given that her work required that she be on a rotating shift schedule. She felt that the Army did not provide the flexibility she needed to raise her child.

In terms of deployment readiness, LT J seemed less prepared than most of her peers. She was one of the few single parents who indicated that she would be less likely than others to report "in a timely manner" in the event of war. She also expressed some concern about being separated from her daughter in the event. With regard to child care arrangements in the event of deployment, it appeared that final details were not yet worked out. LT J's supervisor noted that she would need to get herself "more ready for deployment," as well as improve her leadership skills before she could be considered a strong candidate for continuation.

As noted earlier, the shift work required on LT J's job made her life difficult. Because of her hours she was unable to have regular day care, which she would prefer, and had to hire a more expensive private babysitter. In addition, LT J keenly felt the lack of a suitable support group. She was geographically separated from her family and her closest friends (her primary source of emotional support), and found it difficult to fit in with either her single or married peers. She felt that single parents who had never been married received less sympathy and support than others, and were less likely to be accepted.

Flexible duty schedules and day care centers that met single parents' needs were the two suggestions she offered as ways the Army could make her life easier.

First Lieutenant P. The second individual in the below average performance category, First LT P, also reported some problems adjusting to single parenthood. First LT P has never married, and at 27 is the sole parent of a 3-year-old child. LT P works as commodity manager, managing the maintenance reporting for the Division. She has been on active duty in the Army for 3 years and would like to stay on, but was recently denied her request for voluntary indefinite status. According to her present supervisor of 2 months, LT P performs quite well on her current job (average to above average),

especially considering that she's still learning the job, but apparently had problems in a previous assignment which resulted in a bad performance report. The reasons for the poor performance appraisal are not clear, but LT P reports that, in general, single parent status has not influenced her job performance. She does, however, feel that single parents are not highly regarded in the Army. She believes that there is an automatic assumption that single parent status will detract from the job, and she feels that never married women tend to be looked down on.

The day care arrangements LT P has worked on are very satisfactory because the woman who cares for her child is a military wife, who is very understanding and flexible about the hours LT P keeps. Another advantage is that the babysitter is certified by the day care center, and if the need arises she can consult with the center or get help. Overall, however, LT P does not find the Army environment conducive to a satisfying family or social life. The long hours and frequent schedule disruptions prevent her from planning activities and caring for her child the way she would like. She is afraid that her child does not have the emotional stability he needs, and as a result she feels somewhat guilty about taking any time away from him to date or do things for herself. Despite these dissatisfactions, she believes she would probably have decided to stay in the Army if her poor performance record had not precluded this option.

Summary. The two average to below average performers are more similar than the individuals in any other category. Both feel somewhat isolated and report few sources of social support. Both officers also seem to feel that never having been married has prevented them from fitting in with others. Schedule disruptions and concern for the stability of their children's lives were also major problems for both officers and contributed to their general dissatisfaction. Only LT J attributed some of her performance problems to the strain of single parenthood, but the morale of both appears to have suffered from their inability to satisfactorily resolve their job/family conflicts.

#### Summary: Officer Case Studies

One of the most striking things about the officer case histories is that the above average and superior performers all seem to share five characteristics. First, compared to the average and below average performers they are quite experienced and well established in their careers, holding relatively high ranks (all are captains or experienced warrant officers). The officers in the lower two categories are all lieutenants except for the one major only 6 months from retirement. Second, all the superior and above average performers are very enthusiastic about their jobs. They find their work challenging and satisfying and would like to continue in their present career paths. A third common factor is that the above average performers all have child care arrangements that accommodate their schedules and afford them peace of mind with regard to the quality of care their children receive on a day-to-day basis. Long separations and the need to make alternative arrangements when parents are absent for several months at a time appear to pose the only major child care problems. The fourth characteristic shared by the good and superior performers is that they all enjoy good support networks. They have a number of friends in the area, and most importantly, feel close to and supported by their colleagues at work. In all cases except one, the supportive

work group includes the immediate supervisor. A fifth factor is the flexibility these officers have to negotiate work or travel schedules and adjust their work hours to enable them to meet their family obligations. Supervisors did not question their decisions or their dedication when these officers felt they needed to take time during the day to attend to important family matters (e.g., sick child, appointments). The excellent performance ratings of this group indicate that the privilege did not negatively affect performance, but whether the good performance was primarily a result or a cause of the flexibility they enjoyed cannot be determined. In any case, the flexibility afforded them seems to be a very important factor in the adjustment and satisfaction of the high performing single parent.

In contrast to the better performers, the two problem cases both lack good support networks. They have few friends and feel isolated from work and colleagues. Their lives in general do not seem to be very fulfilling and they report feeling lonely and isolated. One characteristic they share with two of the average performers is an apparent lack of enthusiasm for their jobs. While they tend to like Army life in general, the average and below average performers do not seem to derive much satisfaction from either their work or their personal lives. Some individuals believe that their performance or advancement opportunities may have been hampered by their single parent status, but supervisors do not attribute any performance deficiencies directly to problems unique to single parents.

The primary child-related problems officers report are career requirements that force them to work very long days or leave their children for long periods of time. Overseas assignments and frequent, extended TDY requirements, and extensive overtime all interfere with their desire to spend time with their children. As the only parent available to guide and nurture their children, single parents feel the loss of time with their children very strongly.

From a retention perspective, 3 of the 11 single parents in this sample appear to be people the Army would prefer not to retain: the two officers in the bottom performance category, and the officer who failed to meet weight standards. The loss of these people probably represent desirable turnover from the Army's perspective. The remaining eight officers in the top three performance categories all appear to be good to excellent candidates for retention. Of the eight good retention candidates, six definitely plan to stay in, although two are unhappy with the inflexibility of assignment policies and one is concerned about extensive TDY requirements. The two individuals who are still undecided about their career plans are considering leaving primarily because of job dissatisfaction, in one case, and frequent, extended travel requirements in the other. Job/family conflicts then are directly responsible, in this sample, for only one potential loss of a valued service member. However, the concern expressed over assignment policies and extensive TDY requirements suggest that the career decisions of single parent officers in earlier career stages might well be influenced by job/family conflicts.

### Enlisted Case Studies

Enlisted personnel, like the officers, were grouped into one of four performance categories based on the ratings of their supervisors: "Outstanding/at the very top" (N=5); "Above average/very good" (N=4); "Average to above average" (N=3); and "Below average" (N=3). Their situations are discussed below.

#### Outstanding/At the Very Top

The soldiers in the top performance category are somewhat unusual demographically in that four out of the five single parents identified as outstanding performers have never been married (three women, one man). Four out of five also have at least one pre-school age child. Two of the female soldiers are unsure about making the Army a career, but the other two outstanding performers intend to stay in until retirement.

SGT C (E-7). SGT C is 35 years old, divorced, and has custody of two children, ages 9 and 4. He has been a single parent for almost a year and a half and has been in the Army over 16 years. He likes the Army, enjoying his career as well as the steady employment and income, and intends to stay in until retirement.

In his job as a training NCO, SGT C's supervisor rates him consistently "at the very top." He is regarded as being very professional, taking full responsibility for his job and following through to ensure that things are done correctly. His supervisor strongly recommends that he be retained in the Army because of his expertise and professionalism.

For child care, SGT C is one of the few in our sample to use post day care. He is satisfied with the cost of the day care and likes the fact that there are educational activities, but the hours are too short to accommodate his schedule conveniently.

SGT C is basically happy with his family and enjoys having his children around, but finds that single parenthood can be quite lonely. He also feels that he is often preoccupied, bringing work home with him, and that when he is not with the children, he worries about them. For emotional support he relies primarily on his friends and his girl friend. However, his dating is restricted because of the problems finding and paying for a babysitter, and his reluctance to bring someone home for the night. He is somewhat close to his colleagues at work, but his parents are not living and he is not at all close to either ex-spouse or her parents.

SGT C does not feel that his single parent status has hurt his career in any specific way, but he would probably try to enhance his potential by attending college in the evening if he did not have sole responsibility for the children. In terms of improvements the Army might make, SGT C does not feel that single parents should be given any special treatment, but he would like to see the day care centers extend their hours.

Specialist B (E-4). Specialist B, 34, is the only never married male in our sample to have custody of a child. He has had full-time custody of his

12-year-old daughter for 1 year, and shared responsibility for her with her grandmother for 1 1/2 years prior to that.

Specialist B has been in the Army for over 3 years working primarily as a legal clerk for the battalion. He is unusual for an enlisted service member in that he is a musician with a master's degree, who joined primarily to be able to travel. He intends to stay in the Army until retirement now that he is a single parent because he needs the steady income and benefits. Other things he likes about the Army include the pay and rank structure, the emphasis on education, and the fact that the Army is constantly trying to improve the system and upgrade itself. His primary complaint about the Army is the poor placement system and lack of career counseling once a soldier is in the system.

According to the captain who supervises him, Specialist B should not only be retained in the Army, he should be an officer. He does excellent work, needs much less supervision than others, and has not had problems with lateness, inability to participate, or time off.

In terms of his family life, Specialist B is quite happy, although he is dissatisfied with the quality of education and day care his daughter is receiving. After school, his 12-year-old daughter is normally looked after by neighbors, but Specialist B is uneasy about not being able to afford to pay someone to be with her full-time. The women at his church have helped with some of the practical matters involved in raising a daughter (e.g., buying clothes, fixing her hair), and his parents, friends, neighbors, and work associates have been a source of emotional support and encouragement. At the same time, however, Specialist B finds that being a single parent is very demanding emotionally and financially. There is very little time or money for him to pursue any interests or social life of his own.

With regard to his career progression, Specialist B reported that at an earlier assignment there had been an incident resulting from his single parent status which temporarily hurt his career. His daughter had fallen at school, and officials had called to say she was being sent to the hospital for tests. Specialist B felt that he should leave work to be with his daughter, but his sergeant disagreed. An argument ensued for which Specialist B received an Article 15 and a loss of rank for disrespect. According to Specialist B, this sergeant believed that single parents had no place in the Army, and that Specialist B should find another alternative for his daughter. Specialist B noted that, although this type of bias against single parents does exist in the Army, most people, especially those in his current work group, are quite supportive.

Specialist B had several suggestions regarding things the Army could do to ease the problems of single parents. First, he suggested that some type of social worker or sponsor be assigned to help new single parents work out some of their initial problems. Such an individual might also serve as a contact to other single parents, and might be able to facilitate the adjustment of the children involved. Secondly, Specialist B proposed that there be some type of youth or activity center established near the schools so children could go there instead of home to an empty house after school. A third consideration was the safety of the housing available to enlisted personnel, especially those with "latch-key" children.

Specialist H (L-4). Specialist H is the first of the three never married women in the high performance category. She is 23 and has a 1-year-old son. She has been in the Army for 2 years and works as a clerk-typist in a combat support unit. Specialist H would like to stay in the Army after completion of her present assignment, but she's undecided about staying until retirement. She is very satisfied with the Army, and likes the job security (knowing that it will always enable her to take care of her son), but she is not sure she wants to be a career soldier, always facing the possibility of alerts and deployment.

In terms of performance, Specialist H's supervisor feels that she is a great asset to the unit. In his words, "she has shown that she can do an outstanding job and does not let her child interfere with her duties." She requires little supervision, contributes greatly to morale through her sense of humor and outgoing nature, and consistently does an excellent job. She seems to be quite mature, and her well-thought-out child care plans leave little doubt in her supervisor's mind that she would readily deploy if the need arose. He strongly recommends that she be retained in the Army.

Specialist H is very satisfied with her child care arrangements. She has a good babysitter, and her child is happy. She is also content with her family life, but finds it hard financially and often misses having someone to share her life with. She has some good friends in the area, but does not go out much because she feels badly about leaving her son when she has to be away from him so much for work. She gets a lot of support and encouragement from her work associates and supervisor, however, and can count on her parents when she needs them.

All in all she's doing quite well, the primary problems being money and having to "pull duty" or work overtime. There is nothing in particular she feels the Army could do to improve her life as a single parent; she feels that the Army has a lot to offer a young woman and has been especially good for her personally.

SGT E (E-5). SGT E, 26, is the mother of a 5-year-old daughter. She has never been married, and so has been a single parent for 5 of her 8 years in the Army. SGT E works as a personnel records specialist and tc.m supervisor, and according to her supervisor does an outstanding job. She is rated "at the very top" in every aspect of her job and is regarded as conscientious, highly motivated, and completely dependable. Her supervisor rated her "99" on a 0-99 point quality scale and strongly recommends her retention.

SGT E is generally satisfied with the Army, especially "schooling and career opportunities," but doesn't want to stay in until retirement. She'll probably stay for another tour, then try to find a comparable civilian job that does not include the basic demands of Army life (e.g., frequent moves, late hours, essentially being "on call" all the time, PT, and daily formations). Her daughter is a major factor in SGT E's desire to leave the Army, primarily because of the moving and the amount of time she has to spend away from her.

SGT E sends her daughter to the post nursery school, and other than the policy requiring payment for whole week or the whole year, even if the child won't be there the whole time, is satisfied with this arrangement. She rates

her family life as happy because she really enjoys being with her daughter. For this reason she doesn't mind her restricted social life (restricted also because she has a boyfriend stationed in Turkey). She is very close to her parents and two friends, and somewhat close to her work colleagues, but does not ask for or get much emotional support and encouragement for raising her daughter from these sources.

The primary thing that would make SGT E's life as a single parent easier would be to be stationed at the same post for several years.

SGT K (E-5). SGT K, the last person in the superior performance category, is 28 years old with two children, ages 4 and 2. She has never been married and has been a single parent for 4 of her 8 years in the Army. She works in the personnel management field dealing with orders, retention deferments, and people on leave.

According to her supervisor, SGT K does an outstanding job. She is rated "at the very top" in every area of her job and is regarded as being extremely dependable. Her supervisor has no doubts about her willingness to deploy and strongly recommends that she be retained in the Army.

SGT K intends to stay in the Army until retirement. She likes the Army and sees it as a good way of ensuring that she can continue to support her children. Her child care arrangements, a babysitter who takes the children into her home, are very satisfactory. The babysitter is flexible about hours and alerts and the cost is very reasonable. Post day care is unsuitable because the facilities are not open early enough, and they refuse to take children when they are sick.

SGT K's family and social life are happy. She enjoys her children and gets a lot of emotional support from friends, the children's father, and her work associates. She doesn't think that single parent status has or will hurt her career, but she feels that the Army is somewhat down on single parents, especially females.

The primary suggestion she has for the Army is that they give moral support to single parents. It is a difficult life, and she feels it would help if there were some sort of organization or support group to enable single parents to meet each other and share their problems and experiences.

Summary. All of the enlisted single parents identified as outstanding performers are generally happy with the Army. Two of the five individuals in this category, however, believe that they will probably leave the service because of job/family conflicts and the demanding nature of Army life. The main problems include too little time to spend with children, separations, and the possibility of alerts and deployment.

The single parents in this performance category all report having at least two good friends or sources of emotional support. However, four out of the five also mentioned that loneliness and restricted time and opportunities for social life are problems in their personal lives. There is no one single factor that appears to be responsible for the ability of these single parents to excel at work in spite of the tremendous demands of single parenthood. As a group, however, they convincingly demonstrate that there is no reason to

assume that enlisted personnel, even those presumably operating under the greatest handicaps (never married and with pre-schoolers) cannot adapt admirably to their circumstances and do an outstanding job at work.

#### Above Average/Very Good Performers

Three of the four people in this performance category intend to make the Army a career, while the fourth person is still undecided. There are three men and one woman in this performance category, all divorced, and only one has pre-school age children.

SGT L (E-6). SGT L is 30 years old, divorced, and the father of two children, ages 9 and 10. He's been a single parent for 2 1/2 years, and has been in the Army for 9 years. His duty MOS is in radio repair and he works as an electronic repair shop foreman.

SGT L plans to stay in the Army until retirement. He was given the option of getting out of the service when his wife left while he was in Korea, but he was able to arrange for someone to take care of the children (albeit at great expense, \$1,000 per month) and so decided to stay in. Now that he is back in the States, his 9- and 10-year-old children take care of themselves after school until he or his girlfriend get home from work.

SGT L likes the benefits and challenges of the Army, and enjoys working as an NCO with younger people. On the negative side is the possibility of foreign assignment which would be very difficult with children, and the complications which will arise if he is required to move while he is in the process of buying a house.

In terms of performance, SGT L's supervisor rates him "at the very top" in most areas, and above average in the rest. He has never had a problem with lateness, absence, or time off. His supervisor says that he knows his job very well, handles his troops with skill, and appears to enjoy the Army and his supervisory responsibilities. His supervisor strongly recommends that he be retained in the Army.

One factor contributing to SGT L's ability to function so well is the fact that he has been living with a woman for over a year. She takes care of the children, much as a mother would, and removes many of the burdens of single parenthood from SGT L. He rates his personal life as being very happy, primarily because of his relationship with his girlfriend and because he is finally buying his own home. He doesn't feel at all close to his former wife, his or his wife's parents, or his work associates or supervisor, but the support provided by his girlfriend and two close friends appears to be enough for him.

SGT L notes that few people even realize that he is a single parent. This is partly because he is living with a woman and partly because he deliberately tries to "low-profile" his single parent status to avoid being associated with those single parents who take advantage of their situation.

The only suggestion SGT L had for the Army was that they stabilize tours, allowing personnel to stay in one place for 4 or 5 years so they will have the chance to build a relationship and change their marital status.

Specialist J (E-4). Specialist J, 32, has had sole custody of her two children, ages 11 and 15, for 1 year. She has been in the Army for 7 years and is currently working as a travel clerk. She likes the Army a lot and is especially happy with her job and the people she works with. She is concerned, however, about the effect of frequent moves on her children. It's hard for them to be uprooted once they've made friends, especially as they get into their teens.

Specialist J is presently undecided about staying in the service after her current enlistment, both because of her concerns about moving frequently and because she plans to be married (to a fellow service member) within the next year.

According to her supervisor, Specialist J would be an asset to the Army should she decide to stay in. She requires little supervision, is trustworthy, caring, and shows initiative. She is rated at the very top in most aspects of her job performance, and has not demonstrated any problems with lateness, absences, time off, or readiness to deploy. Her child care plans in the event of deployment appear sound and practical.

In terms of day care, Specialist J's children are old enough that only the youngest (11 years old) requires formal supervision after school. A babysitter watches him until Specialist J gets home, and takes both boys overnight when she has night duty.

Specialist J reports that her family life is very happy, primarily because she has her children, she is engaged to be married, and she doesn't have financial problems. She also feels very close to her work associates, parents, and friends, and feels that the Army has been supportive in helping her take care of her children. Her youngest child has received good remedial reading classes at the post school, and CHAMPUS helped her to get services to deal with the same child's emotional problems. Army policies in general are perceived as being supportive, and she believes that at least 90% of the people in her company would go out of their way to help her if she had a problem.

The only improvement Specialist J could suggest was that tours be a little longer for enlisted personnel.

SGT D (E-6). SGT D is a 29-year-old divorced male who has just recently (6 months ago) acquired custody of his four children. The children, three girls and one boy, range in age from 3 to 11. SGT D has been in the Army for 10 years and is serving currently as a training NCO.

SGT D likes a number of things about the Army: the discipline and responsibility, the opportunity to "make things happen," the travel, the free education and training, and the wide range of career options. He plans to stay in until retirement, and although his single parent status was not a major factor in his decision, he believes that the Army is a fairly good environment in which to raise children.

In terms of performance, SGT D's supervisor rates him consistently as being either above average, or at the very top. His single parent status has not interfered with his job performance and when he's had to pull duty or work late he has been able to "pull it off." SGT D's supervisor strongly recommends that he be retained in the Army, even though the supervisor feels that in most cases the Army doesn't have adequate resources (e.g., day care) to deal with single parents.

SGT D feels fortunate in that he has managed to work out a very satisfactory system of day care. His four children go to a babysitter's home every morning at 6:00 a.m. and the two oldest go to school from there, while the two youngest stay with the sitter all day. His only problem with the arrangement is the cost. The post day care center would be cheaper, but there are not enough openings. He reports that there is a year-long waiting list for the post facilities.

SGT D rates his family life as neither happy nor unhappy. After only 6 months as a single parent he is still looking for a better way to manage things so that he has a little time for himself and isn't so strapped financially. His own parents are deceased and he's not at all close to his ex-spouse and her parents, so family is not available as a source of support for him. He also has few friends in the area, can't afford to go out at night or date, and does not feel close to his work associates. Most of the emotional support and encouragement he receives comes from his work supervisor, who also gave him the flexibility he needed at work when his wife first left the family. If single parent status has affected his job performance at all, he feels it is in a positive manner because now, especially, he has more to work for than just himself. He is acutely aware of his dual responsibilities to both the Army and his family and has carefully worked out the child care arrangement necessary in case of war.

The only suggestions SGT D has for how the Army could help single parents concern providing on-post, after school day care for older children, and helping out financially with the extra burden of paying for child care.

SGT H (E-7). SGT H, 45, was the only person interviewed who was a single parent as a result of the death of his spouse. He had been a single parent to his two teenagers (14 and 15 years old) almost a year at the time of the interview.

SGT H is in a combat unit, and currently runs the information desk at the personnel center. He has been in the Army for 17 years and plans to stay until retirement, both for the benefits and for the opportunity to serve his country.

SGT H is fairly satisfied with his life right now, primarily because he is not worried about his children. He feels they are safe on their own after school because most of the neighbors know each other and "keep an eye" on neighborhood children. The children also seem to have adjusted well to their mother's death and are faring well in school. His close friends in the area have been a source of support for him, as have the members of his wife's church and her co-workers. He also feels that the Army has been very supportive in terms of his job and location of assignment so that he could attend to family matters during his wife's illness and death.

SGT H's performance is rated as being above average to "at the very top." In his supervisor's eyes he is a dedicated, professional soldier, whom he would strongly recommend for retention. Neither his single parent status nor the death of his spouse appear to have negatively affected his performance.

The primary problem SGT H foresees in the future is the possibility of having to move and sell his home while he is still in financial difficulty because of expenses incurred during his wife's illness. His life would be easier if he could be stabilized where he is.

Summary. All four of the above average/very good performers like the Army and their current jobs. One of the four, however, despite her satisfaction with the Army, may leave because of personal plans for marriage and her concern about the impact of frequent moves on her children. For all four people, short tours and frequent moves were seen as problematic; everyone expressed the desire to stay longer in one place. In terms of family life and social support, the two individuals involved in serious relationships appeared to be the most satisfied, but all four had at least one good source of social support.

#### Average to Above Average Performers

The three soldiers in this performance category are all divorced and have children 9, 10, or 11 years old. The two men with 14 and 19 years in service are both satisfied with the Army and plan to stay in until retirement. The female soldier with 9 years in service is still undecided about making the Army a career because of her child care concerns.

SGT H (E-6). SGT H is 45 years old and divorced. He has three children altogether, two who are older (21 and 22) and one 11 year old he has had joint custody of for 2 years.

SGT H has been in the Army 19 years and has intended for some time to stay in until retirement. He likes the benefits and security of the Army and has no real complaints about his life.

In his job, SGT H supervises 10-12 people and is in charge of policing a 35 square mile area. According to his supervisor, he does a consistently above average job, and has never posed any problems with regard to time off, lateness, absence, or readiness to deploy.

SGT H's circumstances are quite favorable for a single parent because he shares responsibility for his child with the child's mother, who still lives in the area. She looks after their son after school and can take him overnight whenever needed. She and her parents are exceptionally supportive and make SGT H's life much easier. He also feels very close to several friends and his work associates, including his supervisor. Interestingly, his supervisor of the last 6-12 months was not aware that SGT H was a single parent until he was called for this interview.

SGT H does not report any special problems attributable to his single parent status, and his only suggestion for making life easier is to reduce the number of times enlisted personnel have to move.

SGT P (E-7). SGT P is 34 years old, divorced, and the father of two children, ages 9 and 11. He has been a single parent for about 6 years, and has been in the Army for 14 years.

SGT P likes the Army, including both the benefits and his job as a platoon sergeant, and he intends to stay in until retirement. His single parent status was not a factor in his career decision since he had decided to make the Army a career long before he became a single parent.

In terms of performance, SGT P is rated as being consistently above average. According to his supervisor he is highly motivated and has made several concrete contributions to the unit (e.g., setting up a new section, establishing a new training program, keeping the organization running smoothly). SGT P exhibited some behavioral problems during his first 2 to 3 months in the unit which his supervisor attributed to SGT P's association with an NCO who had a drinking problem, and difficulty adjusting to both his divorce and the climate of a new unit. Within several months, however, he made a turnaround, and is now reported to serve as a very good example for his troops. His supervisor strongly recommends retaining him in the Army.

SGT P's day care problems are largely solved now that his children are older. Neighbors watch them after school, and his mother takes them for summer vacations and when he is out in the field. The moving around, however, makes Army life difficult for single parent children, and SGT P stretches himself trying to give his children extra attention.

SGT P has a supportive group of friends and work associates, and while he feels that the Army in general makes no exceptions for single parents, he acknowledges that he has sometimes been given a break (e.g., excused from TDY) because he is a single parent. SGT P's family life is happy because he enjoys doing things with the children, but at the same time, it leaves him little extra time to devote to the unit. He sometimes feels that this might hurt his career in the future. All in all, however, he reports that he is quite satisfied. More pay and the assurance that his retirement benefits will not be cut are the only things he would ask of the Army.

SGT J (E-5). SGT J is 29 years old, divorced, and has custody of one 10-year-old child. She has been a single parent for 2 years, and lives off post in a trailer park. She has been in the Army for 9 years and is basically satisfied with the Army (especially the job security, medical care, and education opportunities for soldiers), but is unhappy that she cannot care for her child as she would like. It bothers her that she is unable to take time off to be with her child when he is sick, and she is concerned that there is no one she can completely trust to take responsibility for her child in the event of field duty or deployment. Because of these concerns she is undecided about her career after her present enlistment. At the same time, however, she is drawn to the job security afforded by an Army career.

In her job as a supply sergeant, SGT J is rated as being average to above average. Her current supervisor of 6 weeks reported that the supply room had been very poorly managed when he took over, and that SGT J had lacked the guidance she needed to do a good job. Since he started working with her, however, she has gained confidence in herself and is rapidly improving her

performance. She appears to be highly motivated and he strongly recommends retaining her because of her potential.

SGT J's son takes care of himself after school, so her child care problems consist primarily of coming up with a realistic dependent care plan. Her main problem is that she does not have a babysitter or any relatives or close friends in the area to help her out in an emergency. Her mother is currently designated as caretaker for her child in her deployment plan, but her mother lives 2,000 miles away and has financial problems, leaving SGT J with some doubts about the adequacy of these arrangements. Both she and her supervisor, however, report that she is at least as likely as others to report for duty in a timely manner in the event of deployment.

With regard to her personal life, SGT J is neither happy nor unhappy. She reports getting some emotional support and encouragement from friends and her work supervisor, but otherwise appears to have little in the way of social support. She does not date, and finds her post rather isolated with regard to shopping centers and recreational activities. She feels that her single parent status does not affect her job, and believes that as long as she is in her present job she should be able to take care of her family responsibilities during off duty hours. She hesitates to ask for or take any time off from work because she believes that many people think that female single parents are simply trying to "get over," or take advantage of the situation when they need to take time off for their children.

The main thing the Army could do to improve SGT J's life would be to help ensure that children would be cared for in the event of a deployment. Her concerns would be alleviated if there were a center where children could go initially, if she had to deploy on short notice, and someone she could count on to follow-up on dependent care arrangements to ensure that they were working out satisfactorily.

Summary. Two individuals in the average to above average performance category intend to remain in the Army. Both of these soldiers receive a lot of help from their former spouses in caring for their children, and have good local support networks. In contrast, the soldier who is undecided about her career intentions is troubled by her inability to find a trustworthy caretaker for her son during absences, and she has relatively few sources of social support. Her sense of isolation and concern for her child (especially in the event of deployment) are the main reasons she may choose to leave the service.

#### Below Average

The three below average performers have between 6 and 14 years of experience in the Army. One individual intends to stay in, and the other two will probably leave. Not surprisingly, none of the three are considered to be good candidates for retention, although the reasons behind their below average performance ratings are different in each case.

SGT R (E-6). SGT R is 33 years old and has custody of an 11-year-old daughter. He has been a single parent for 2 years, but expects to be married soon.

SGT R is a squad leader and works as a supervisor of parachute riggers. He has been in the Army for 14 years and plans on staying in until retirement. Right now he is rather dissatisfied with the Army, however. His primary complaint concerns ethnic prejudice and abuses of power and rank. He feels that "who you know and how they feel about you is more important than what you know."

SGT R's supervisor is aware that SGT R feels discriminated against because of his ethnic background, but the supervisor's interpretation is that SGT R simply resents people who exceed him in rank. SGT R's supervisor also finds SGT R's attitude a problem in several other areas. His supervisor feels that basically SGT R is not a dedicated soldier. He is preoccupied with personal concerns and doesn't appear to care about his job or his troops. SGT R requires a lot of supervision himself, and in supervising his own subordinates uses authority and fear rather than leadership.

SGT R's supervisor gave him quite low ratings overall and does not believe that he should be retained in the Army. The performance and attitude problems reported by the supervisor do not appear to him to be related to SGT R's single parent status. SGT R, himself, believes his performance to be adequate and does not report any job- or career-related problems attributable to his single parent status. He does note, however, that he gets no support for raising his child from his immediate supervisor, his work group, or Army policies, and that some supervisors clearly display their displeasure when he needs to take time off for his daughter (e.g., for medical reasons).

With regard to the things the Army could do to make his life easier, SGT R suggests that there be more organized family activities, that all parents be exempt from extra duty on holidays, and that pay or BQO allowances be increased.

SGT T (E-5). SGT T is 24 years old, divorced, and the mother of two children, ages 2 and 3. She was a single parent for the first year after her oldest child was born, then married and subsequently separated from her husband, returning her to single parent status about a year ago.

SGT T has been in the Army about 6 years. She is in charge of protective equipment and maintenance in the Nuclear, Biological, and Chemical warfare room. Originally she wanted to stay in the Army until retirement, but recently problems have arisen which make her feel that she will probably leave upon completion of her present enlistment. Primarily she is concerned about having to go to Germany. She wants to stay in CONUS both because she is trying to get a divorce, and because her youngest child is not in very good health. Although SGT T believes that she would stay in the Army if she could avoid going to Germany, she reports that she is very dissatisfied with the Army in a number of respects. She feels that the Army takes the problems of married service people into consideration, but that it "turns its back" on single parents who have problems. For example, when her son required hospital care she had to take a lot of leave and ask to be excused from field duty. She feels that this time off was responsible for a low performance evaluation she received. She also feels that the long absences required of a soldier (e.g., field duty, REFORGER) and the long hours demanded by the job contribute to making the Army a poor environment in which to raise children. While she has solved her day care problems for now by acquiring a roommate who looks

after her children, she believes that single parent status has hurt her career.

In terms of job performance, SGT T acknowledges that she has been late more frequently than others and is more often unable to participate in daily formations. She attributes the lateness and absences to problems in getting her children to day care before she got her present roommate/live-in babysitter. She feels that her overall performance, however, is at least average, despite the fact that her current assignment is not compatible with the occupational specialty she was trained for.

SGT T's supervisor also notes that she is more frequently late than others, but does not agree that it is always for a valid reason (e.g., her children's medical problems). SGT T's supervisor does not trust her, and generally regards her as a poor performer. He reports that she needs to be prodded to get things done, and tends to abuse her prerogative to delegate authority. For these reasons, he would not recommend SGT T for continuation in the Army. Her supervisor believes that single parents, in general, do not belong in the Army, but says that her performance problems and his recommendation are not based on her single parent status. He has supervised her for 1 1/2 years and reports that she was often late and unreliable even during the time she was living with her husband.

SGT T says that her family life is unhappy, primarily because she brings work problems home with her, and has little time for the children after work. She gets some support from, and feels quite close to her friends in the area and her ex-spouse, but gets no support from either set of grandparents, her work supervisor, or the Army. It seems to SGT T that single parents are looked down on and viewed as trying to get out of work. She notes that the Army could make her life a lot easier just by understanding the problems of single parents and the "hassles involved when you're short of funds and have to deal with day care and doctor's appointments."

SGT S (E-6). SGT S is 39 years old, divorced, and has custody of a 7-year-old son. He has been in the Army for 11 years, and is currently working with the Chaparral weapons system as a squad leader.

SGT S has been a single parent for 6 years, but for most of this time his son has lived with SGT S's brother and sister-in-law. He just learned a couple of weeks prior to the interview, however, that his brother's wife is returning to work and in 2 months will no longer be able to care for his son. SGT S is quite concerned about the upcoming requirements for child care, especially during field exercises. His job requires a great deal of field duty and he is afraid that he may have to leave the service in order to ensure that his child is cared for. It appears that SGT S's thoughts about leaving the service may be due to other factors as well. He is quite dissatisfied with the Army, at this point, especially regarding promotion policies, and feels that his time in grade has been ignored. He also reports that he is often lonely and misses his family and friends who live very far away. In terms of job performance, though, SGT S still rates himself as being at the very top.

SGT S's supervisor, a friend for almost 10 years, is very sympathetic toward his problems. He sees them as somewhat more serious than SGT S does,

however. The supervisor reports that SGT S appears to be caught in a serious depression triggered by a combination of personal health problems, dissatisfaction with promotions (very few granted recently in his MOS), and concern over his ability to care for his child. His depression has had a serious impact on his job performance, especially his ability to inspire and motivate his troops. He is quite withdrawn and preoccupied, and his supervisor is concerned that if he doesn't get psychological help soon, he may have to replace SGT S as an NCO. Replacing SGT S would be a painful alternative for the supervisor because of both their friendship and his belief that SGT S could be an excellent soldier once again, if helped through his problems.

SGT S reports that his primary concern is that even if he can manage to stay in the Army, his responsibilities toward his child will hinder his career in the future. The only way he sees that the Army might help him in his current situation would be to reclassify him into an occupational specialty with less field duty.

Summary. From the perspective of the supervisors, child-care responsibilities and job/family conflicts are not directly responsible for the poor evaluations received by these three individuals. Rather, attitudinal, motivational, and personal problems appear to be the reasons behind the failure of these people to perform satisfactorily. It seems likely that (except possibly in the case of SGT S--for whom child care worries may have been the "final straw") these individuals would not be recommended for retention even if they were not carrying the additional family burdens of single parenthood.

#### Summary: Enlisted Case Studies

One of the somewhat surprising findings to emerge from the enlisted case studies is the apparent lack of association between performance ratings and the demographic and situational characteristics of the single parents interviewed. The three single parents identified as poor performers appear to have more work-related, social, and personal problems than others in the sample, but these problems do not appear to result from unique demographic characteristics, or any particularly stressful set of situational factors. Similarly, the soldiers identified as outstanding performers are not distinguished from the others in the sample by uniquely favorable circumstances, in fact, the five outstanding performers face what one might expect to be the more difficult family situations (pre-school children and not previously married). The quality and convenience of child care arrangements and the degree of social and emotional support individuals receive appear to be related to personal and family satisfaction, but again, superior performers do not appear to have any advantage over average and above average performers in this regard. In the case of this limited sample, superior performance appears to be largely a function of individual dedication and motivation rather than situational factors related to single parent status.

With regard to the overall quality of life experienced by enlisted single parents, most in this sample appear to lead quite stressful lives. Lack of money, too little time, and loneliness or isolation were problems reported by many in the sample. In addition, nearly all the respondents were apprehensive about the frequent moves associated with a career in the Army. To a large

extent, these problems are interrelated. Financial difficulties prevented most of the single parents interviewed from hiring household help to ease their domestic burdens or babysitters to give them time to socialize with friends. Frequent moves compound the problems, not only because of the time and cost involved, but also because social ties are severed and parents are forced to find new day-time, after school, over night, and emergency child care arrangements. Limited funds greatly inhibit the ability of parents to make arrangements that ensure both quality care and convenience, and child care during long separations due to field exercises and overseas assignments are nearly always problematic. In addition, few enlisted soldiers appear to have much flexibility to negotiate work schedules that enable them to spend the time they would like with their children or meet obligations that arise during working hours.

In spite of these problems, most of the single parents in this sample like the Army, enjoy their jobs, and value the benefits and steady income associated with a career in the Army. However, of the 11 soldiers in the sample identified as good candidates for retention 4 are considering leaving the Army because of job/family conflicts (3 individuals) or a combination of Army demands and personal reasons (1 individual).

Suggestions the enlisted personnel offered concerning how the Army could make their lives easier included: extending the length of tours, providing convenient day care and supervised after school activity centers, and establishing some sort of counseling or support group to help single parents get together and work out their problems.

#### Differences Between Enlisted and Officer Single Parents

As the summaries of the officer and enlisted personnel case studies suggest, there appear to be some differences between these two groups of single parent soldiers. While the small sample size precludes generalizing these findings to the larger population of single parents, examination of differences uncovered in this sample can be helpful in guiding future research efforts. First, among the officers there were several factors that distinguished officers in the top two performance categories from those in lower categories: (1) more experience in the Army and higher ranks; (2) more enthusiasm for their jobs; (3) convenient, reliable, and individually tailored child care arrangements; (4) extensive support networks, including members of their work groups and their supervisors; and (5) flexibility in arranging work schedules. Among enlisted personnel, on the other hand, the only factor distinguishing the better from the average and below average performers was that better performers tended to have closer relationships with work group members and/or supervisors. More general differences between officer and enlisted single parents in this sample included the following:

1. Officers were more likely to express enthusiasm for and commitment to their jobs. Nearly all the enlisted people reported liking the Army, but very few singled out their work as an important source of satisfaction.

2. Officers overall had more sources of social support, and support networks were more likely to include work supervisors and associates, and family members including parents they could count on for support.
3. Officers were less likely to have financial difficulties and feel apprehensive about requirements for frequent moves.

These differences suggest that single parent officers may have an advantage over enlisted personnel in terms of their personal, social, and financial resources. In other words, the quality of life for officers, in general, appears to be somewhat better than for enlisted personnel in this sample.

#### CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Before presentation of the overall conclusions, it must be emphasized, again, that the data discussed in this report are based on very small samples which may not be representative of the population of single parents in the Army. The statements in the text summarizing relationships among the variables explored in this study are intended to integrate information from the case studies and suggest issues future researchers and policy makers might want to address, not from the basis for generalizations to all single parents in the Army. The limitations of the case study approach with regard to external validity, however, are balanced by the advantages of interactive interviews and enhanced internal validity. The perspectives, explanations, and attributions of the respondents allow for rich descriptions of a variety of situations and enhanced understanding of complex interactions.

The previous summaries in this report were designed primarily to examine the effects of single parent status on the performance of single parent soldiers (based on the evaluations and attributions of their supervisors) and the impact of work/family conflict on the career intentions of these soldiers. The final case study analysis presented in this section is designed to highlight important research and policy issues by identifying common threads in the experience of single parents and important variations in the family situations and lifestyles of the parents studied.

Qualitative analyses of the single parent interviews point to four recurrent themes in the data, each reflecting an area of concern to single parents. First, most single parents feel a great deal of pressure due to the conflicting demands on their time. Expectations of supervisors, demands of the work itself, extra duty, travel, physical training, field exercises, and "obligatory" social functions all intrude on what most civilians would consider to be nonwork, personal, or family time. In military families with nonworking spouses these intrusions into "family" time may be unwelcome and inconvenient, but they are not likely to cause the stress extra work demands create in single parent families. Single parents essentially have two full-time jobs, and it is very difficult to reduce the work involved in maintaining a household (e.g., cleaning, shopping, cooking, laundry, etc.) to accommodate extra time demands of the workplace. In addition, single parents are acutely aware of the emotional needs of their children. Most feel a responsibility to

give them extra time and attention to compensate for both the absence of the second parent and the time they themselves are unavailable. Time, then, is the scarcest and perhaps most valuable resource of a single parent. The understanding and acceptance of this fact by Army leaders, commanders, and supervisors may go a long way toward alleviating some of the unnecessary and avoidable time pressures experienced by single parents.

A second and related theme in the data reflects the concerns single parents have about child care. In terms of their day-to-day child care arrangements, single parents are concerned with the quality of care their children receive, the convenience of the arrangements in terms of location and hours, and the flexibility of the child care provider to accommodate unexpected work contingencies. With unlimited financial resources, convenient, flexible, high quality care can generally be procured (e.g., full-time, live-in, professional trained help). However, in reality most soldiers (especially junior enlisted personnel) are forced to accept less than ideal arrangements because of their financial limitations. With less than ideal arrangements, the stress inherent in the single parent lifestyle can be exacerbated in several ways. Parents may worry about the quality of care their children receive, experience even more time pressures because babysitters are inconveniently located, and constantly fear that they won't be able to respond to unexpected work demands because child care providers expect children to be picked up at the same time every day.

The provision of high-quality, low-cost, flexible, day-time, and after school child care on post, combined with babysitter referral and exchange services could alleviate much of the emotional and financial stress associated with child care concerns. As currently operated, most post day care centers do not meet the needs of single parents because of limited openings, inadequate hours, lack of flexibility, and in some cases, inadequate or poorly trained staff.

Child care in the case of long-term separations constitutes a more difficult problem. Some jobs involve extensive travel, field duty, or training, requiring that soldiers be away from home frequently and/or for long periods of time. In other cases, career paths require overseas assignments and unaccompanied tours. In such situations parents are confronted with two issues: finding affordable, reliable, and caring "parent substitutes" in their absence(s), and the possible negative effects of frequent or prolonged absences on the emotional well-being of their children. In discussing possible solutions to these dilemmas, the single parents interviewed almost uniformly expressed the belief that the Army should not be expected to compromise its needs or mission accomplishment to accommodate families. For example, in the event of deployment for war or national emergency, all the soldiers except one expressed their readiness to leave their families to fulfill their military obligation. However, in less extreme circumstances, several single parents saw room for and a need for more flexibility in the system. In their view, minor changes in assignment policies and promotion and training requirements could reduce the frequency and length of parent-child separations without affecting readiness. A re-examination of the impact of current assignment policies on both military readiness and the quality of life experienced by single-parent and dual career families might suggest relatively painless ways the Army could accommodate the needs of soldiers severely constrained by family considerations.

A third theme to emerge from the data was the importance of having a supportive work supervisor and some measure of flexibility to respond to the family emergencies and obligations that occasionally arise during work hours. Children do occasionally get sick, and illness imposes certain obligations on a parent. The single parent soldier with a sick child may need to stay home, arrive late, or take time off to visit the child, pick him up from school or the babysitters, or take him to the doctor. In addition, there are occasions in a child's life (e.g., an important game, a birthday, Christmas, a school play, or recital) when having a parent there is very important to the child. Supervisors in the Army cannot be blamed for generally assuming that a soldier has a spouse available to take care of sick children and important family obligations. However, the increasing numbers of single parent and dual career families in the military make it imperative that leaders begin to acknowledge that some soldiers have family obligations that they alone can fill. Supervisors who deny requests for leave or question the dedication of soldiers who respond to the needs of their children are doing the Army, as well as the soldier, a disservice. The officers who received the highest performance evaluations and were most satisfied in their immediate work situations were those whose jobs or supervisors allowed them some discretion in determining when family needs took precedence over scheduled work hours. Supervisors who respect the family obligations of their soldiers and trust them to meet these obligations without compromising their work commitment or performance may well be rewarded with happier, more dedicated subordinates. While the effects of supportive, flexible work supervisors on single parent performance are still speculative at this point, the generally facilitative effect of social support on performance and coping is quite well documented. As Army leaders and supervisors come to better understand the constraints imposed on soldiers by different family structures, and the consequences of making it unnecessarily difficult for soldiers to meet their family obligations, perhaps more soldiers will find that a fulfilling Army career does not preclude involvement with one's family.

The fourth area of concern was the frequency of relocations. As one soldier pointed out, one solution to the single parent problem is to allow single parents to remain in one place long enough to establish a relationship with someone and remarry. This may not be the best reason for examining policies concerning the frequency of PCS moves; however, it does highlight the need to consider the importance of social ties. Single parents are dependent on a variety of people for their child care, social, and emergency back-up needs. It may take considerable time at a new location to cultivate the relationships and make the arrangements that allow single parents to function most effectively in their work and home lives. Having to start forging these relationships from scratch every 2 or 3 years adds considerably to the stress and adjustment problems which characterize relocations even in the most favorable circumstances. The hardships imposed on parents who must move themselves and their children without the support of a spouse may warrant reconsideration of relocation policies for single parents.

The extent to which the problem areas discussed above affect any one individual single parent family will vary with the particular circumstances of that family. The case studies suggested that three situational variables may be especially relevant to the ability of single parents to adapt to the competing demands of work and family.

The first important situational variation is the financial status of the single parent. Present income level, personal assets, and the amount, if any, of financial support received from the former spouse determine the degree to which options are constrained by financial considerations. Most single parents in our sample reported that they received no financial support from the child's other parent, so current pay levels generally determined the amount of income available for maintenance of the household and child care. As noted earlier, financial problems, in addition to being stressful in their own right, limit the ability of single parents to hire the kind of household and child care help that could help alleviate some of their time pressures and child care concerns. In military samples, income levels can be estimated from soldiers' ranks, and junior enlisted personnel appear to be at a distinct disadvantage. However, it might be useful in future single parent research to include measures of financial support from outside sources, as well as individual reports of current household help and child care expenses, to gain a better understanding of how financial variables affect quality of life.

A second important family variation is the amount of emotional and emergency back-up support available from relatives. The most fortunate single parents know they can count on a family member who knows and loves their children (e.g., their own parents, brothers and sisters, the child's other parent or grandparents) to take responsibility for the children in the event of emergencies, temporary separations, or deployment. The availability of this kind of family support network (or "safety net") can have a great impact on the overall peace of mind of a single parent. For example, the single parent father who knows that his children can stay with his parents until he is settled after his next PCS and the mother who knows that the children's father will take good care of them if she gets sick or has to go to the field for 3 weeks are likely to be much better off emotionally than the soldier whose family is not able to give this kind of support. Individuals without this kind of back-up support may live in constant fear of the unexpected (e.g., surprise alert, new assignment, illness), or worry about the breakdown of their fragile network of child care arrangements. It is recommended that future research address the issue of family support and emergency back-up by assessing the degree of confidence single parents have that a relative (or very close friend) could be counted on to temporarily support or care for their children if the need arose. In addition, Army agencies concerned with providing supportive services to families might explore avenues for helping single parents to find or negotiate back-up support.

A third family variation, the age of the children in the family, has a direct bearing on the nature of the outside services required by single parents. Individuals with preschoolers are obviously more constrained and have more comprehensive requirements for child care services than single parents with school aged children. However, the needs of parents of school aged children should not be slighted. Few parents leave school aged children unsupervised, if they feel they have a choice, until the children are well into their teens. When financial constraints, isolation from neighbors, lack of transportation or lack of convenient after school activity centers force parents to leave children unsupervised after school, they are likely to worry about the child in the interim, and feel a strong need to come home from work on time. The Army needs to recognize that the types of services parents need change with the ages of their children, but some types of child care or

supervisory service is generally required until children are in their mid-teens.

The three situational variations discussed: financial status, availability of family back-up support, and age of youngest child represent three important resources and constraints for single parents. From a research and policy-making perspective, these variables may represent the framework of a typology of single parent family situations. Individuals in different cells of a typology based on these three dimensions may need different patterns or combinations of institutional support. The personal characteristics of individual single parents, the social relationships they develop, and the work demands they experience might be construed as the individual level variables associated with coping and adaptation within the different family types.

Clearly additional research on larger samples of single parents is required to test hypotheses about the factors affecting the performance, career intentions, satisfaction, and coping abilities of single parents. The findings of the present study regarding factors associated with performance, differences between enlisted and officer samples, salient concerns of single parents, and key situational variables, point to issues future research might fruitfully explore. In the meantime, policy makers, program planners, and family advocates may wish to further their efforts to enhance the quality of nontraditional families in the Army by reviewing and acting on some of the suggestions offered by the single parents themselves.

Suggestions concerning ways the Army might help single parents in their efforts to combine family responsibilities and Army careers have been referred to throughout the text. The following list of recommendations is offered to summarize the main point raised by the interviewees themselves.

1. Provide day care adequate to meet the needs of single parents by having post facilities: (a) open earlier and extend hours well into the evening, (b) work out a way to care for children with minor illnesses (e.g., separate sleeping/play areas; nurse on duty), (c) add staff to improve staff/child ratios, (d) expand facilities to eliminate waiting lists, and (e) provide round-the-clock services to accommodate shift work and emergencies.
2. Establish policies to enable full-time day care providers to use dependent services and facilities for the children of single parents.
3. Provide counseling to single parents through individual counselors or the establishment of organizations such as Parents without Partners to serve as clearinghouses for information and services, and to provide an opportunity for single parents to meet with and help each other.
4. Review policies concerning required assignments (especially overseas) and PCS moves to see if they might be made more flexible to accommodate the unique circumstances of single parents.
5. Emphasize to Army leaders, commanders, and supervisors that after an initial period of adjustment, most single parents seem to be able to

successfully adjust to the conflicting demands of single parenthood and Army life, especially if they are given some measure of flexibility and support to enable them to respond to the needs of their children.

In summary, there are a number of things the Army might do to enhance the quality of life and retention prospects of single parents in the Army. However, lest the focus on problems suggest otherwise, it must be emphasized that the overall results of this study are quite positive. The data from this study support the findings of two previous large-scale studies in suggesting that negative stereotypes about single parents are unwarranted. The single parents in this study, as in the GAO (1982) study, apparently are able to perform their jobs quite effectively despite their additional family responsibilities. The number of outstanding performers in this sample (while in no way representative of the proportion of outstanding single parents in the Army) convincingly illustrate that there are single parents in the Army whose effectiveness and dedication to their work make them very valuable assets. Furthermore, many of these efforts would help other families, particularly dual career families, who are also constrained by unusual family responsibilities. The findings also support Orthner's (1980) results showing that most single parents do an admirable job of adjusting to the demanding circumstances of the single parent life style, and value their careers and hope to remain in the military until retirement.

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## APPENDIX A

### SUPERVISOR'S INTERVIEW PROTOCOL (OFFICER)

I am from the Army Research Institute in Washington. We are looking at a number of issues concerning single parents in the Army. As a part of our data collection we are talking with the immediate supervisors of single parent officers to acquire information about the performance of single parents in the Army. Your responses to this interview will be totally confidential, and will not be shared with anyone other than people who are directly involved in the study. Your comments will not be shared with your subordinate and following the completion of the study data will only be reported in a group format. I would like to stress that for your responses to be useful, it is important that they be both candid and accurate. Also, please be as specific as you can.

Respondent's sex \_\_\_\_\_ Rank \_\_\_\_\_

Installation \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

So as to avoid any possible confusion I am going to give you a copy of some of the questions I will be asking as well as possible responses to these questions. Throughout the interview I may ask you to elaborate on a particular response.

1. How old are you? \_\_\_\_\_

2. Race/ethnicity (Ask only if not apparent)

a. White \_\_\_\_\_

b. Black \_\_\_\_\_

c. Hispanic \_\_\_\_\_

d. Other \_\_\_\_\_

3. How much education have you completed?

a. Grade school \_\_\_\_\_

b. Some high school but do not have a diploma or GED \_\_\_\_\_

c. GED \_\_\_\_\_

d. High school diploma \_\_\_\_\_

e. Some college \_\_\_\_\_

f. College graduate \_\_\_\_\_

g. Some graduate work \_\_\_\_\_

h. Graduate degree \_\_\_\_\_

4. What is your current marital status?

- a. Married \_\_\_\_\_
- b. Separated or divorced \_\_\_\_\_
- c. Widowed \_\_\_\_\_
- d. Never married \_\_\_\_\_

5. Are you presently living with your spouse?

Yes \_\_\_\_\_

No \_\_\_\_\_

6. How many children do you have? \_\_\_\_\_

7. How many children do you have primary physical custody of? \_\_\_\_\_

a. How old are these children? \_\_\_\_\_

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8. Are you \_\_\_\_\_'s immediate supervisor?

9. How long have you supervised \_\_\_\_\_?

- a. less than 1 month \_\_\_\_\_
- b. 1-2 months \_\_\_\_\_
- c. 2-3 months \_\_\_\_\_
- d. 3-6 months \_\_\_\_\_
- e. 6-12 months \_\_\_\_\_
- f. 1-2 years \_\_\_\_\_
- g. 2 or more years \_\_\_\_\_

10. To the best of your knowledge does this officer live without a spouse, but with at least one dependent minor?

- a. Yes \_\_\_\_\_
- b. No \_\_\_\_\_

11. How frequently do you see this officer?

- a. Continuously, or almost continuously during the day \_\_\_\_\_
- b. Frequently, but not continuously (i.e., many times during the day) \_\_\_\_\_
- c. Often (i.e., several times a day) \_\_\_\_\_
- d. Occasionally (i.e., once or twice a week) \_\_\_\_\_
- e. Never or almost never \_\_\_\_\_

12. Briefly describe this officer's job duties.

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13. To what extent, if any, does this officer's job require each of the following?

	Very great extent	Great extent	Moderate extent	Some extent	Little extent	Not required
Field Exercise	—	—	—	—	—	—
Temporary Duty Travel	—	—	—	—	—	—
Alerts	—	—	—	—	—	—
Daily Formations	—	—	—	—	—	—
Shift Work	—	—	—	—	—	—
Duty (SDO, SDNCO, CQ)	—	—	—	—	—	—
Extra duty	—	—	—	—	—	—

14. Are there other officers in your unit who have about the same duties as this officer?

- a. Yes \_\_\_\_\_
- b. No \_\_\_\_\_

15. When comparing this officer with other officers in your unit who have about the same duties (or simply other officers in your unit if none have the same duties) how much more or less frequently has this officer been late for each of the following?

	About					
	Much more Frequently	More Frequently	the Same	Less Frequently	Much Less Frequently	Not Required
Field Exercise	—	—	—	—	—	—
Temporary Duty Travel	—	—	—	—	—	—
Alerts	—	—	—	—	—	—
Daily Formations	—	—	—	—	—	—
Shift Work	—	—	—	—	—	—
Duty (SDO, SDNCO, CQ)	—	—	—	—	—	—
Extra Duty	—	—	—	—	—	—

16. If the supervisor has indicated that lateness is a problem, probe for:

- a) What the supervisor thinks is causing the problem.
- b) The supervisor's feelings about the situation.
- c) Whether such lateness has had an impact on the readiness or performance of other officers or the unit.

17. Compared to other officers in your unit who have about the same duties (or simply other officers in your units if none have the same duties) how much more or less frequently has this officer been unable to participate in each of the following:

	Much more Frequently	More Frequently	About the Same	Less Frequently	Much Less Frequently	Not Required
Field Exercise	—	—	—	—	—	—
Temporary Duty Travel	—	—	—	—	—	—
Alerts	—	—	—	—	—	—
Daily Formations	—	—	—	—	—	—
Shift Work	—	—	—	—	—	—
Duty (SDO, SDNCO,CQ)	—	—	—	—	—	—
Extra Duty	—	—	—	—	—	—

18. If the supervisor has indicated that absences are a problem, probe for:

- a) What the supervisor thinks is causing the problem.
- b) The supervisor's feelings about the situation.
- c) Whether such absences have had an impact on the readiness or performance of other officers or the unit.

19. Compared to other officers in your unit who have about the same duties how would you rate this officer's performance in each of the following:

	At the Very Top	Above Average	Average	Below Average	At the Very Bottom
Field Exercise	—	—	—	—	—
Temporary Duty Travel	—	—	—	—	—
Alerts	—	—	—	—	—
Daily Formations	—	—	—	—	—
Shift Work	—	—	—	—	—
Duty (SDO, SDNCO,CQ)	—	—	—	—	—
Extra Duty	—	—	—	—	—

20. Probe for the factors which contributed to each of the above evaluations.

a. Field Exercise

b. Temporary Duty Travel

c. Alerts

d. Daily Formations

e. Shift Work

f. Duty (SDO, SDNCO, CQ)

g. Extra Duty

21. Compared with other similar officers in your unit, has this officer required more, less, or about the same amount of time off from duty for the following reasons.

	Relatively much more time off	Relatively more time off	About the same amount of time off	Relatively less time off	Relatively much less time off
To meet sudden and unexpected emergencies (e.g., <u>taking time off</u> to have a car repaired or cash a check or tend to a dependent)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
To take <u>emergency leave for an extended period</u> (e.g., to take care of a sick or handicapped individual)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
To make or receive <u>personal telephone calls</u> during duty hours (e.g., to arrange social events, to discuss financial matters, to take care of dependent related problems)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

22. If the supervisor has indicated that more time off has been taken, probe for what the supervisor believes are the contributing factors:

- a. Time off for sudden and unexpected emergencies (child care problems?)
- 
- b. Emergency leave for an extended period of time (child care problems?)
- 
- c. Receive personal telephone calls (child care problems?)

23. How much time do you spend supervising this individual in comparison to other officers?

- a. Much less time supervising this officer \_\_\_\_
- b. Somewhat less time supervising this officer \_\_\_\_
- c. About the same amount of time supervising this officer \_\_\_\_
- d. Somewhat more time supervising this officer \_\_\_\_
- e. Much more time supervising this officer \_\_\_\_

24. If the supervisor has indicated that more supervision is required, probe for:

- a. What specific areas?
- 
- b. Why?
- 
- c. Is this due to single parent status?

25. Comparing this officer to other officers as before, how would you rate this officer's performance in regard to the following factors:

	At the Very Top	Above Average	Average	Below Average	At the Very Bottom
Quality of Work Done	—	—	—	—	—
Amount of Work Done	—	—	—	—	—
Contribution to the Morale of Others	—	—	—	—	—
Overall Job Performance	—	—	—	—	—

26. Probe for the factors which contributed to each of the above evaluations.

a. Quality of work done.

b. Amount of work done.

c. Contribution to the morale of others.

d. Overall job performance.

27. Again, making the same kind of comparison between this officer and other officers how likely is it that he or she will report in a timely manner in the event of war?

- a. Much more likely \_\_\_\_\_
- b. More likely \_\_\_\_\_
- c. About the same \_\_\_\_\_
- d. Less likely \_\_\_\_\_
- e. Much less likely \_\_\_\_\_

28. Why do you believe this?

29. Comparing this officer to other officers as before, how likely is it that he or she will not report for duty at all in the event of war?

- a. Much more likely \_\_\_\_\_
- b. More likely \_\_\_\_\_
- c. About the same \_\_\_\_\_
- d. Less likely \_\_\_\_\_
- e. Much less likely \_\_\_\_\_

30. Why do you believe this?

31. If you had to make a recommendation about this officer right now, how strongly, if at all, would you recommend that this officer be allowed to continue on active duty (at present grade level)?

- a. Strongly recommend continuation \_\_\_\_\_
- b. Moderately recommend continuation \_\_\_\_\_
- c. Cannot recommend for or against continuation \_\_\_\_\_
- d. Moderately recommend continuation be denied \_\_\_\_\_
- e. Strongly recommend continuation be denied \_\_\_\_\_

32. What factors were you considering when you made this selection?

33. When comparing this officer to other officers, would you be more or less likely to recommend continuation on active duty for this officer?

- a. Much more likely to recommend continuation \_\_\_\_\_
- b. More likely to recommend continuation \_\_\_\_\_
- c. About the same \_\_\_\_\_
- d. Less likely to recommend continuation \_\_\_\_\_
- e. Much less likely to recommend continuation \_\_\_\_\_

34. Has this officer ever exhibited behavioral problems which impacted on, or had the potential to impact on, the readiness of your unit? (i.e. drug or alcohol use, AWOL, aggressiveness, withdrawal or apathy).

- a. Yes \_\_\_\_\_
- b. No \_\_\_\_\_ (skip to 36)

35. If the supervisor responded with yes, probe for:

a. The specifics of the problem.

b. What his/her thoughts are concerning what contributed to the problem.

c. How did such behaviors have an impact on the readiness or performance of other officers or the unit?

36. Compared with other similar officers in your unit, has this officer exhibited behavioral problems:

Much more frequently \_\_\_\_\_

More frequently \_\_\_\_\_

About the same \_\_\_\_\_

Less frequently \_\_\_\_\_

Much less frequently \_\_\_\_\_

37. Probe for the specifics the supervisor was using for this comparison.

I would like to conclude with some questions which are more open-ended.

38. How do you think the Army feels about single parents?

39. Do you think the Army views single parent males differently from single parent females?

40. What about the different categories of single parenthood (divorced, widowed, never married), does the Army view these categories differently?

41. Do you think that being a single parent hinders career advancement for officers in the Army?

42. What about job assignments, are they influenced by being a single parent?

43. Do you think the Army ought to have a separate policy for single parents as compared to other service members?

a. What about male vs. female single parents?

b. What about the different causes of single parenthood (divorce, death, or never having been married. Should the Army have separate policies for each of these categories?

APPENDIX B  
SINGLE PARENTS INTERVIEW PROTOCOL

INSTRUCTIONS TO THE INTERVIEWER

1. Information collected on this interview is purely VOLUNTARY. If the interviewee feels that any question is too personal or too sensitive to answer, the interviewer will NOT require the interviewee to answer. That question will be skipped. If the interviewee feels that the entire interview is too personal or too sensitive, no interview will be conducted.
2. Failure to either respond to any question or to the entire interview will NOT result in any penalty.
3. Information provided on this interview is strictly confidential. The researcher will respect the privacy of the individual. No information will be made public of how any single interviewee responded.
4. The information will be used for research and analysis purposes only.

## APPENDIX B

## SINGLE PARENT INTERVIEW PROTOCOL (Enlisted)

I am from the Army Research Institute in Washington, we are conducting a study which will investigate a number of issues concerning single parents in the Army. The first phase of the study is exploratory in that we will be interviewing single parents and supervisors to get a better idea of what the special concerns or problems of single parents are. Your responses to this interview will be totally confidential, and will not be shared with anyone other than people who are directly involved in the study. Following the completion of the study data will only be reported in a group format. Please be as honest and specific with your answers as possible.

Respondent's name \_\_\_\_\_

Respondent's sex \_\_\_\_\_ Rank \_\_\_\_\_

Installation \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

1. How old are you? \_\_\_\_\_

2. What is your current marital status?

a. Married \_\_\_\_\_

b. Separated or divorced \_\_\_\_\_

c. Widowed \_\_\_\_\_

d. Never married \_\_\_\_\_

3. Are you presently living with your spouse?

Yes \_\_\_\_\_

No \_\_\_\_\_

4. How many children do you have? \_\_\_\_\_

5. How many children do you have primary physical custody of? \_\_\_\_\_

a. How old are these children? \_\_\_\_\_

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Note: If respondent has indicated that he/she is living with his/her spouse or does not have physical custody of any children terminate the interview.

.

6. How long have you been a single parent? \_\_\_\_\_

7. Race/ethnicity (Ask only if not apparent)

a. White \_\_\_\_\_

b. Black \_\_\_\_\_

c. Hispanic \_\_\_\_\_

d. Other \_\_\_\_\_

8. How much education have you completed?

a. Grade school \_\_\_\_\_

b. Some high school but do not have a diploma or GED \_\_\_\_\_

c. GED \_\_\_\_\_

d. High school diploma \_\_\_\_\_

e. Some college \_\_\_\_\_

f. College graduate \_\_\_\_\_

g. Some graduate work \_\_\_\_\_

h. Graduate degree \_\_\_\_\_

9. Do you live in

a. On post barracks/BEQ/BOQ \_\_\_\_\_

b. On post family housing \_\_\_\_\_

c. Off post government housing \_\_\_\_\_

d. Off post civilian housing \_\_\_\_\_

10. What arm of the service are you in?

a. Combat \_\_\_\_\_

b. Combat Support \_\_\_\_\_

c. Combat Service Support \_\_\_\_\_

d. Other (specify) \_\_\_\_\_

11. Are you presently classified as deployable? Yes \_\_\_\_\_  
No \_\_\_\_\_

12. What is your primary MOS? \_\_\_\_\_

Secondary MOS? \_\_\_\_\_

• Duty MOS? \_\_\_\_\_

13. Briefly describe your job duties. \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

14. How long have you been in the Army? \_\_\_\_\_

15. What are your career intentions at the present time?

a. Stay in the Army until retirement \_\_\_\_\_

b. Stay after completion of present enlistment  
but undecided about staying until retirement \_\_\_\_\_

c. Undecided about action after present enlistment \_\_\_\_\_

d. Probably leave upon completion of present enlistment \_\_\_\_\_

e. Definitely leave upon completion of present enlistment \_\_\_\_\_

f. Probably leave before the end of present enlistment \_\_\_\_\_

g. Definitely leave before the end of present enlistment \_\_\_\_\_

16. Why did you decide this?

17. Was being a single parent a significant factor in your career decision?

How?

• Why?

18. How satisfied are you with the Army?

a. Very Satisfied \_\_\_\_\_

b. Satisfied \_\_\_\_\_

c. Neutral \_\_\_\_\_

d. Dissatisfied \_\_\_\_\_

e. Very Dissatisfied \_\_\_\_\_

19. What about the Army makes you satisfied?

20. What makes you dissatisfied?

21. Do you believe that the Army is a good environment for a single parent to raise children?

## How Come?

22. What is your primary method of child care?

23. How satisfied are you with this arrangement?

a. Very Satisfied

b. Satisfied

c. Neutral

d. Dissatisfied

e. Very Dissatisfied

What makes you satisfied/dissatisfied?

25. What do you see as the advantages and disadvantages of post day care facilities (hours, quality convenience, cost)?

26. Are your children in public, private or DoD schools?

27. How satisfied are you with the education your children are receiving?

- a. Very Satisfied \_\_\_\_
- b. Satisfied \_\_\_\_
- c. Neutral \_\_\_\_
- d. Dissatisfied \_\_\_\_
- e. Very Dissatisfied \_\_\_\_

28. What makes you satisfied/dissatisfied?

Next are some questions which address your personal or social life.

29. How happy are you with your family life?

- a. Very happy \_\_\_\_
- b. Happy \_\_\_\_
- c. Neutral \_\_\_\_
- d. Unhappy \_\_\_\_
- e. Very unhappy \_\_\_\_

39. What makes you happy/unhappy?

31. Do you receive financial support for raising your from children from:

- a. Your children's other parent? (if applicable) \_\_\_\_
- b. Your parents? \_\_\_\_
- c. Your ex-spouse's parents? \_\_\_\_

32. How much emotional support and encouragement for raising your children do you receive from:

a. Your children's other parent (if applicable)

► b. Your parents?

c. Your ex-spouse's parents?

d. Your friends?

e. Your work supervisor?

f. Your work group?

g. Army policies

33. What people or organizations have helped you the most in dealing with single parenthood? (When respondent gives name, ask what received)

34. Approximately how many people do you consider to be good friends?

35. Are these people located in this area?

36. Among these friends that are located in this area, are they primarily military personnel or civilians?

37. How close do you feel toward:

a. Your friends

1	2	3	4	5
Not Close at all				Very Close

b. Your neighbors

1	2	3	4	5
Not Close at all				Very Close

c. Your parents

1	2	3	4	5
Not Close at all				Very Close

d. Your work associates

1	2	3	4	5
Not Close at all				Very Close

e. Your work supervisor

1	2	3	4	5
Not Close at all				Very Close

f. Your ex-spouse (if applicable)

1	2	3	4	5
Not Close at all				Very Close

g. Your ex-spouse's parents

1	2	3	4	5
Not Close at all				Very Close

38. How frequently do you date?

39. Is the person(s) you are dating in the military or a civilian?

40. How has being a single parent affected your social life?

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Next will be some questions which address being a single parent in the Army.

41. How do you think the Army feels about single parents?

42. Do you think the Army views single parent males differently from single parent females?

43. What about the different categories of single parenthood (divorced, widowed, never married), does the Army view these categories differently?

44. Have you ever tried to "low profile" your single parent status?

45. Have you had any negative experience in the Army because you are a single parent?

46. Do you think that being a single parent has hindered your career advancement in the past?

47. Do you think being a single parent will hinder your future career advancement?

48. What about job assignments, have they been influenced by your being a single parent?

49. To what extent does your job require each of the following?

	Very Great Extent	Great Extent	Moderate Extent	Some Extent	Little Extent	Not Required
Field Exercise	—	—	—	—	—	—
Temporary Duty Travel	—	—	—	—	—	—
Alerts	—	—	—	—	—	—
Daily Formations	—	—	—	—	—	—
Shift Work	—	—	—	—	—	—
Duty (SDO, SDNCO, CQ)	—	—	—	—	—	—
Extra Duty	—	—	—	—	—	—

50. Are there other soldiers in your unit who have about the same duties as yourself?

a. Yes \_\_\_\_\_

b. No \_\_\_\_\_

51. When comparing yourself to other soldiers in your unit who have about the same duties as you (or simply other soldiers in your unit if none have the same duties) how much more or less frequently have you been late for each of the following?

	Much More Frequently	More Frequently	About the Same	Less Frequently	Much Less Frequently	Not Required
Field Exercise	—	—	—	—	—	—
Temporary Duty Travel	—	—	—	—	—	—
Alerts	—	—	—	—	—	—
Daily Formations	—	—	—	—	—	—
Shift Work	—	—	—	—	—	—
Duty (SDO, SDNCO, CQ)	—	—	—	—	—	—
Extra Duty	—	—	—	—	—	—

52. If the soldier has indicated that lateness is a problem, probe for:

a. What the soldier thinks is causing the problem (child care problems?)

b. The soldier's feelings about the situation

c. Whether such lateness has had an impact on the readiness or performance of other soldiers or the unit.

53. Have child care problems influenced your ability to be on time for these duties? (if not already addressed)

54. Compared to other soldiers in your unit who have about the same duties as yourself (or simply other soldiers in your unit if none have the same duties) how much more or less frequently have you been unable to participate in each of the following:

	Much More Frequently	More Frequently	About the Same	Less Frequently	Much Less Frequently	Not Required
Field Exercise	—	—	—	—	—	—
Temporary Duty Travel	—	—	—	—	—	—
Alerts	—	—	—	—	—	—
Daily Formations	—	—	—	—	—	—
Shift Work	—	—	—	—	—	—
Duty (SDO, SDNCO, CQ)	—	—	—	—	—	—
Extra Duty	—	—	—	—	—	—

55. If the soldier has indicated that absence is a problem, probe for:

a. What the soldier thinks is causing the problem (child care problems?)

b. The soldier's feelings about the situation

c. Whether such absences have had an impact on the readiness or performance of soldiers or the unit.

56. Have child care problems been a factor in your being able to participate in these duties? (if not already addressed)

57. In your view, has any aspect of your job performance been influenced by your being a single parent?

58. Comparing yourself with other similar soldiers in your unit, have you required more, less, or about the same amount of time off from duty for the following reasons:

	Relatively much more time off	Relatively more time off	About the same	Relatively amount of time off	Relatively less time off	much less time off
To meet sudden and unexpected emergencies (e.g., <u>taking time off</u> to have a car repaired or cash a check or tend to a dependent)	—	—	—	—	—	—
To take <u>emergency leave for an extended period</u> (e.g., to take care of a sick or handicapped individual)	—	—	—	—	—	—
To make or receive <u>personal telephone calls</u> during duty hours (e.g., to arrange social events, to discuss financial matters, to take care of dependent related problems)	—	—	—	—	—	—

59. If the soldier has indicated that more time off has been taken, probe for contributing factors:

a. Time off for sudden and unexpected emergencies (child care problems?)

b. Emergency leave for an extended period of time (child care problems?)

c. Receiving personal telephone calls (child care problems?)

60. Comparing yourself to other soldiers as before, how would you rate your performance in regard to the following factors:

	At the Very Top	Above Average	Average	Below Average	At the Very Bottom
Quality of Work Done	—	—	—	—	—
Amount of Work Done	—	—	—	—	—
Contribution to the Morale of Others	—	—	—	—	—
Overall Job Performance	—	—	—	—	—

61. Probe for the factors which contributed to each of the above evaluations.

a. Quality of work done.

b. Amount of work done.

c. Contribution to the morale of others.

d. Overall job performance.

62. Again, making the same kind of comparison between yourself and other soldiers how likely is it that you will report in a timely manner in the event war?

a. Much more likely \_\_\_\_\_

b. More likely \_\_\_\_\_

c. About the same \_\_\_\_\_

d. Less likely \_\_\_\_\_

e. Much less likely \_\_\_\_\_

63. Why do you believe this?

64. Comparing yourself to other soldiers as before, how likely is it that you will not report for duty at all in the event of war?

- a. Much more likely \_\_\_\_\_
- b. More likely \_\_\_\_\_
- c. About the same \_\_\_\_\_
- d. Less likely \_\_\_\_\_
- e. Much less likely \_\_\_\_\_

65. Why do you believe this?

66. What arrangements have you made for the care of your children in the event of a long term absence (i.e. deployment)?

67. How long would it take to implement these arrangements?

68. How would your children be cared for during this delay? (if appropriate)

69. Would you leave (deploy) before your child care arrangements are in place?

70. How worried would be you be about your children during a long term absence?

1	2	3	4	5	(Select a number)
Not at all worried					Very worried

71. Would this concern influence your job performance?

72. Are there any foreseeable circumstances under which you would not deploy?

We'll conclude with some general questions about being a single parent in the Army.

73. What thoughts do you have about being a single parent in the Army?

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74. What are the major hassles you have to deal with being a single parent in the Army? Prompts: career, social, child care, money.

75. Do you think the Army ought to have a separate policy for single parents as compared to other service members?

a. What about male vs. female single parents?

b. What about the different causes of single parenthood (divorce, death, or never having been married), should the Army have separate policies for each of these groups?

76. What are the main things the Army could do that would make you and your children's lives better?